REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
777 GARNER RD. E.
ANCASTER, ON
Dec 2000
L9K 1J4

CHRISTIAN COURIER
August 7, 2000 A Reformed Biweekly No.2644 $1.60

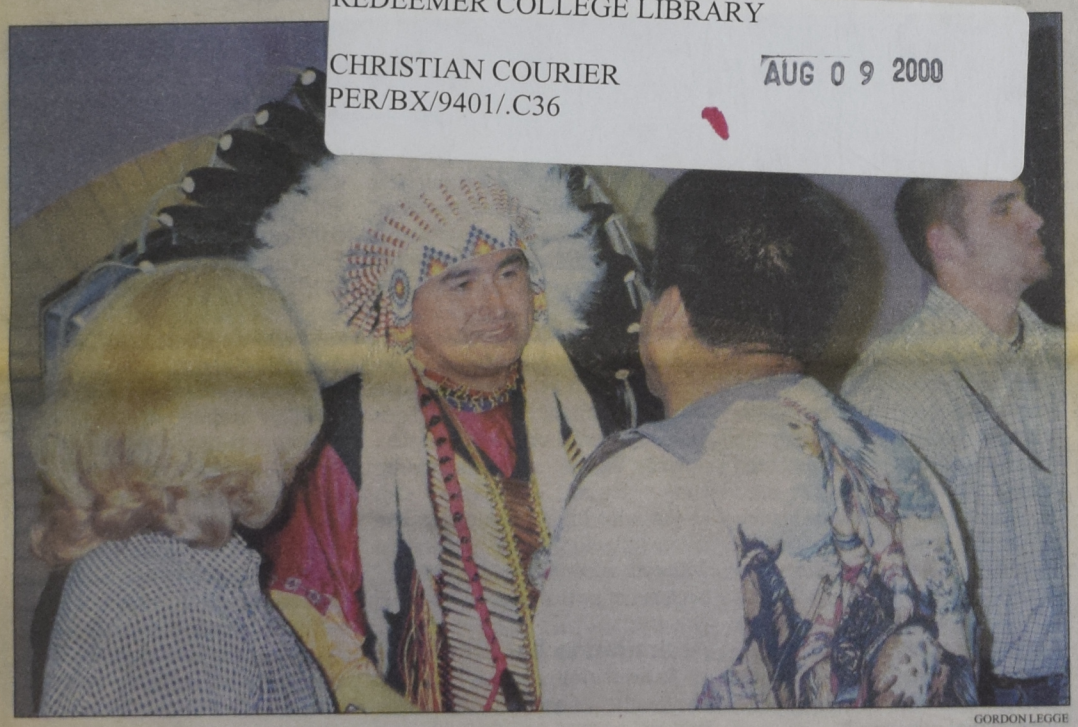
Summer reading and fiction ... pp. 11, 12, 14, 15

Oil company's work in Sudan under fire...p. 16

55th year of publication

Native Christians seek own ways to express Christian faith

REDEEMER COLLEGE LIBRARY
CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36
AUG 0 9 2000



GORDON LEGGE

Rev. Richard Twiss, a Christian minister of Lakota descent and president of Wiconi International, which began staging his Many Nations, One Voice conferences across North America this year. Twiss receives congratulations from people at the conference after he was given a headdress/war bonnet and given the name "He Stands on His Feet." The honor was conferred on him by Blackfoot Elder Vincent Yellow Old Woman.

Gordon Legge

CALGARY — There is a new movement emerging within the native evangelical Christian church that blends indigenous cultural expressions, such as dancing, chanting and drumming, with the worship of Jesus Christ.

A conference at the University of Calgary in late June called Many Nations, One Voice – Celebrations 2000 showcased the emerging movement.

Several hundred native and non-native Christians gathered over the course of three days, joining to listen to a variety of Christian leaders, while linking hands, drumming and singing songs like Kenoronhkhwa (Love/Medicine), a call to take the loving medicine of Jesus to the people of the world:

Yesos Ga Non Ron Kwa/Hi Ya Weh Hi Yoh/ Yesos Yaweh Ga Non Ron Kwa.

Jesus is Good Medicine,/Ga Non Ron Kwa/Ga Non Ron Kwa.

Native cultural traditions suppressed

"This conference is long overdue," said Rev. Vincent Yellow Old Woman, an evangelist from the Siksika Nation, who recounted how the native cultural traditions have been unnecessarily suppressed within the Christian church for far too long.

"It was historic," says Rev. Dean Shingoose, pastor of Calgary Native Pentecostal Church and one of the conference organizers.

"I think it allowed people to see aboriginal people in a positive light in the context of their culture," he said in an interview afterwards. "I think it brought a lot of healing to native people."

People usually associate native singing and dancing in a non-Christian context, such as powwows or the Calgary Stampede's Indian Village.

"We're using the culture as a means to glorifying God. We want worship to be Christ-centred. If it's not Christ- and Word-centred, it's invalid. If we're doing an indigenous form of worship, it's God-honoring."

First Nations worship leaders, like Shingoose, believe that this new integration of culture and worship will help reach many more native people for Christ. Furthermore, they believe it will help indigenous people lead the way in taking Christ to all nations in a new wave of renewal.

Controversial movement

Nevertheless the new movement is controversial. For centuries, Christian missionaries sought to eradicate native spiritual expressions, viewing them as pagan or heathen. In recent decades, however, there has been an attempt, particularly by the mainline Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church, to integrate some of the cultural

See **NATIVE** *page 2...*

El 'dad ranch provides alternative to jail

RIDGEWOOD, Manitoba (MCC Manitoba) — Raymond shudders to think where he'd be today if his social worker hadn't shipped him off to El 'dad Ranch, back in April, 1998.

"I'd probably be in jail right now, just always in and out of jail. That's the way my life was going to go," says Raymond (not his real name). "Because I had no other place to go."

At the time, Raymond was used to the rough streets of Winnipeg and not impressed with the prospect of spending the next couple of years at a residential treatment centre in rural south-eastern Manitoba.

As a native child adopted into a white family, he had struggled with his sense of identity and belonging for years. He was in and out of group homes, and in trouble with the law, until he arrived at El 'dad. "[The El 'dad staff] and other people in my life have said I have come a long way. And I can see that too," says Raymond.

As an agency of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)

See **EL 'DAD** *page 2...*

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Jewel Reimer (letf) and "Raymond" examine El 'dad's hydraulic wood splitter.

News

Native pastors struggle with how to share gospel with aboriginals

... continued from page 1

expressions into Christian worship. The key is to avoid syncretism, a blending of Christian and pagan beliefs.

Ethnic sensitivity overdue

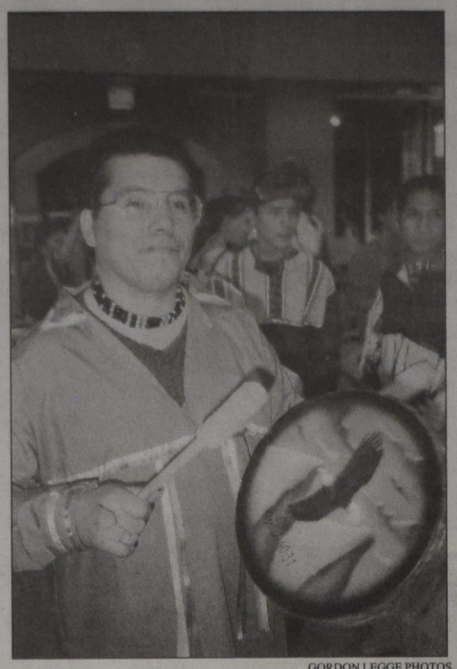
"Ethnic sensitivity is appropriate and long overdue," says Gary Walsh, president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), who addressed the opening session. "The safeguard is an emphasis on the Christian essentials," he said in an interview afterwards.

Shingoose, a Saulteaux from Saskatchewan, has been pastor at Calgary Pentecostal Native Church in Marlborough, for the past 10 years.

More and more, Shingoose, along with many other native pastors across North America, have struggled with why Christianity, despite hundreds of years of missionary activity, has barely made a dent among indigenous peoples in North America.

In 1998, he attended a World Christian Gathering of Indigenous Peoples in Rapid City, South Dakota. There he witnessed First Nations peoples from across the continent worship Christ wearing traditional regalia and celebrating ceremonial songs, music and dance.

Native pastors decided to begin staging conferences across North America. This year, Richard Twiss, a Lakota Christian minister and president of Wiconi International, began staging his Many Nations, One Voice conferences across North America. The Calgary conference is the first in Canada. A dozen years ago, Twiss, 46, began asking, "How do we present Jesus to native people in a way that doesn't repel them but attracts them into a life promised by His Father?"



GORDON LEGGE PHOTOS

Rev. Dean Shingoose, pastor of Calgary Native Pentecostal Church and one of the organizers of the conference in Calgary.

During an interview in Calgary, Twiss said it is no different than what is done to attract young people to a Christian youth group. Bring in rockers, not 70-year-old Southern Gospel artists.

The Anglo church community and the Christian academic community are very supportive, says Twiss, who was once a member of the radical militant American Indian Movement before becoming a born-again Christian in 1974. "We find the greatest opposition from native Christian leaders."

Opponents come out of a paternalistic Anglo missionary church background, he says, which teaches that native ways are steeped in the occult and are devices of the devil. Opponents believe those traditional practices must be replaced by European-Christian approaches.

Culture confused with religion

Cultural practices are being confused with religious practices, he said. It's a question of ensuring that Christ is not compromised, says Twiss. "The biggest obstacle is ignorance, a lack of knowledge."

Twiss, who has taken native Christian groups to China and Europe, says their cultural expressions provide a springboard to witness for the cause of Christ. People the world over are fascinated by indigenous peoples.

In Switzerland, for example, the group began drumming in a Lausanne park. Within minutes, a couple of hundred people gathered around. The native pastors used the occasion to preach the Gospel.

The trip came about because a Christian from Switzerland attended the Rapid City gathering and began working to bring an evangelistic team of native people to Europe. "God is sovereignly placing us in positions of international ministry."

Nevertheless, Canada's urban natives are also a missionary field, says Calgary's Shingoose.

Rev. Dean Shingoose and Rev. Richard Twiss drum and talk during the Many Nations, One Voice conference in Calgary.

There are about 26,000 native people in Calgary. Yet there are only two evangelical Christian churches (the other is the Native Bible Fellowship) which minister to native people. Between them, they have little more than a hundred members. Three other churches have folded in recent years.

There are many reasons why native Christian churches struggle, Shingoose told an afternoon workshop about the challenges facing urban aboriginal ministry: poverty, high unemployment, drug and alcohol problems, an abnormally high suicide rate and an extremely young population with an aversion to Christianity because of past abuses.

Assimilation has failed

Assimilation has failed abysmally, says Shingoose. Rather, maintaining their identity is central to the healing of First Nations peoples, he says.

The evangelical community needs to make a commitment to develop aboriginal leaders and aboriginal churches with aboriginal members, says Shingoose, who dreams of one day pastoring a full-fledged Teepee church in Calgary.

Shingoose, a member of the EFC's Aboriginal Task Force, says he's encouraged by a new level of openness. So is EFC president Walsh.

Awareness is growing," says Walsh. "I think there is real openness to ministering with the native community.

I think many ministering people have given up," he says. "They simply don't know how to minister in such a way as to make a lasting impact. The current dialog is much more encouraging. Native people are telling the real story and it is registering authentically."

Advises Walsh: "Listen, respect, be present, share spiritual life, partner, find resources together."

El 'dad offers caring, nurturing environment

... continued from page 1

Manitoba, El 'dad provides an alternative to incarceration for young men who have intellectual disabilities and have been in regular, though minor, conflict with the law. Most of the residents have some kind of alcohol-related birth defects.

"Instead of being incarcerated, they can live at El 'dad. It's a much better environment. It's a caring, nurturing place," says Jewel Reimer, who together with Addison Klassen, directs El 'dad.

Hebrew for 'God has loved'

El 'dad, which is Hebrew for God has loved, was launched in 1979. Currently four men, between the ages of 22 and 43, live at El 'dad. Residents are referred through the court system or provincial family services department and stay for two years on average.

Much of the funding comes from the provincial government. A second, non-related program, provides a long-term residence for two men with more serious intellectual disabilities.

Situated on 18 acres of wooded land, El 'dad has the feel of a quiet retreat centre. Here, the four residents of the main program learn vocational skills by participating in a small firewood business, cutting and then delivering wood to various customers. El 'dad also leases a sawmill to cut lumber.

Residents learn independent living skills, such as cooking, budgeting, reading and writing. Positive use of leisure time is also encouraged. "We try to introduce them to new activities that they might continue after they leave here," Reimer says.

Staff model good behavior

As well, Reimer says staff work at issues of restorative justice — trying to model and teach good conflict resolution, responsibility for their community, and healing in family relationships.

Raymond, 23, says a major turning point in his life was meeting his birth family approximately a year ago. Since then, he has embraced his native heritage which he says has helped ground him. He has also started his first-ever part-time paying job, unloading pallets at Barkman Concrete in nearby Steinbach.

When he leaves in February, 2001, he will carry with him an unexpected fondness for El 'dad Ranch. "Over the time I've spent here I have come to grow and love the people here," he says.

Reimer says most residents feel an ongoing connection to El 'dad after they leave. "Often they choose to live near here so they can be close to us," she says.

When Reimer first started as co-director in 1995, she had high expectations for changed lives and notable accomplishments. With a growing understanding of the lifelong struggles related to fetal alcohol syndrome, she says she's no longer so idealistic.

"I think my definition of success has changed. I think if residents leave El 'dad and can avoid the justice system — avoid a life of crime — then we've been ultimately successful," says Reimer, adding only one former resident who left during her tenure has since served a jail term. "I'm hoping for all of them that they can enjoy happiness for periods in their life."

News/Politics

Churches hope for new day in Mexico

MEXICO CITY, Mexico — (Religion Today) The ouster of the ruling party in Mexico will bring increased religious freedoms, according to news reports. The Institutional Revolutionary Party, which has dominated Mexican politics for 71 years, fell from power in last week's presidential and congressional elections.

President-elect Vicente Fox Quesada said churches should have more freedom. Quesada, 58, a committed Catholic, promised to end years of repression by former governments and to guarantee freedom to practice one's beliefs, Catholic News Service reported. He promised to ease restrictions on

HERIBERTO RODRIGUEZ/REUTERS

Vicente Fox Quesada

Catholic schools and allow more religious activity in public schools.

The Institutional Revolutionary Party had pursued a policy of strict separation of church and state. Churches are required to register with the government and involvement in political activity is limited. Protestants often complain that their concerns are ignored in the mostly Catholic country, CNS reported.

Catholic leaders said they expect no special favors from the government. Mexican bishops are not expecting drastic improvements, but hope that people will become more aware of the need for religious and moral values, said Aberlardo Alvarado Alcantara, auxiliary bishop of Mexico City.

Sierra Leone Christians targeted

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (Compass) — Rebel soldiers have targeted Christians and churches of various denominations during the past year as this West African country's civil war, one of the region's bloodiest conflicts, shows few signs of abating. "We have been through a very dark period of our country's history. It is not yet over, but we hope and pray that the end is in sight," said Mrs. Ruby Pearce, executive secretary of the Bible Society. The rebels burned at least 20 churches in Freetown, the capital, and an unconfirmed number of churches in the countryside were also looted and burned.

"Wherever you go, you cannot escape the reminders of the killing, the rape and the maiming. Sierra Leone is weeping for its children, and will go on weeping silently for many years to come," said Pearce.

The limits of compassion in politics

Principalities & Powers
David T. Koyzis

Public appeals to compassion have become commonplace at the turn of the century.

Last month the weekend edition of *The Globe and Mail* carried a photograph of quadriplegic actor Christopher Reeve, captioned with the plea that fetal tissue research is his only hope for regaining the use of his limbs. Naturally the reader is expected to sympathize with Reeve's predicament, the solution to which is blocked only by the apparently irrational – and uncompassionate – objections of anti-abortionists.

Electronic media tactics

The electronic media engage in similar tactics by featuring footage of someone adversely affected by some policy pursued by some government somewhere. Clearly we are expected to oppose such a policy, ignoring the fact that, if another policy had been pursued, someone else would have suffered from *its* consequences.

To be sure, we are called to have compassion for others. Many of us were initially drawn to politics out of a concern for those suffering from unjust policies. The fact that so many of my relatives became refugees in Cyprus in 1974 was a strong motivation to understand the political process and the roots of such injustices. It also gave me compassion for others in a similar predicament, especially Palestinian refugees who are treated as strangers in their own land.

All the same, as I've written before in this space, I've come in recent years to understand the limits of compassion in politics,. I've grown suspicious of politicians who claim to be able to feel our pain. Why?

Compassion can overlook punishment

To begin with, if compassion is the desire to alleviate people's suffering, then this mere desire is not sufficient grounds for assessing the justice of a proposed action. An unmitigated compassion may prompt us to forego punishment because it inevitably causes suffering. But if the punishment is deserved, then to refrain from imposing it would be unjust.

Second, compassion by itself tends to lead, not to justice, but to favoritism and one-sided advocacy. Compassion is necessarily selective. Our ability to enter into the suffering of others cannot be stretched indefinitely. There is nothing wrong in this; it is simply part and parcel of our created finitude.

Only God can enter suffering of all

Only God himself is capable of entering into the suffering of all, as he did in the person of Jesus Christ. I may be touched by the plight of the Palestinians, but my compassion for them may blind me to the legitimacy of claims made by Israelis – especially of "sabras" who were born, grew up there and know nothing else – to the same land and resources. In the politics of compassion, one helps only those with whom one is able to feel suffering. The suffering of others in a different position is somehow deemed less valid.

Thus Marxists are moved to action by compassion for the proletariat, but in attempting to emancipate oppressed workers, they are unmoved by the suffering they may cause those getting in the way of their agenda. The irony is that appeals to compassion can be a cover for acts of cruelty, scores of millions of which were committed by the heirs of Marx and Lenin in the former Soviet Union and China.

Finally, arguments from compassion are often a way of short-circuiting the deliberative process – of keeping some arguments from being heard. If politics necessarily entails conciliating diverse interests in accordance with public justice, then arguments need to be heard from all sides before a decision is made. Ruling an argument out of court too soon on the grounds that it is not compassionate is a recipe, not only for less than peaceful politics, but for outright injustice.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario.

WCC wants dialogue with UN to seek end to world poverty

GENEVA (ENI) — The general secretary of the World Council of Churches hopes that his organisation can enter into a "new policy dialogue" about poverty eradication with the United Nations. Interviewed by ENI following a major UN conference last month in Geneva on social development, Dr Konrad Raiser, a prominent German theologian, said that he hoped such a dialogue might be possible with appropriate institutions in the UN system, such as the United Nations Development Programme.

VICTORIA REST HOME
265 Victoria St. N., Woodstock ON N4S 6W2
As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!
Bent U op zoek naar een gezellig retirement home in S.W. Ontario?
Victoria Rest Home is een vriendelijk en gezellig tehuis voor ouderen die niet meer voor zichzelf kunnen zorgen.
Er is 24 uur per dag volledige verzorging aanwezig. De nieuwe eigenaar. leiding, spreekt Engels, Nederlands en Fries.
Zondags is er een kerkdienst en 's winters is er gelegenheid voor bijbelstudie.
Please call for information Anneke Jansen 519-537-3950

Amsterdam 2000
Non Stop Charter Flights via MARTINAIR HOLLAND
SUMMER SELL-OFF
DEPART: Aug. 10, 14 or 17
RETURN: Aug. 17, 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 5 or 9 **$549.**
ONE WAY SPECIAL
DEPART: Aug. 10, 14 or 17 **$299.**
One rate all categories/New bookings only/Tax/Insurance extra
Airport Tax: $62 per person
VERSTRAETE TRAVEL AND CRUISES
14845 Yonge Street, Suite 300, Aurora, ON L4G 6H8
phone: 416-969-8100 or toll free 1-800-565-9267
36 Secord Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1K8
phone: 905-934-4414 Henny Vuyk: 905-934-0666
Visit us www.verstraete.com

Editorial

On hearing the word – in worship and in reading

Harry der Nederlanden

In spite of deepened awareness of how our ways of "seeing" and hence our actions are shaped by inherited words and concepts, certain polarities continue to haunt the way we think, feel and act. We may repudiate certain patterns of thinking in our philosophy and theology, but they come in through the back door like insects through a slashed screen.

This was driven home to me recently when I attended a well-planned and inspiring conference on worship and music at Redeemer. All the main speakers at the conference addressed the Song of Mary, providing a very coherent centre for the diverse workshops offered morning and afternoons. Richard Middleton, who teaches Old Testament Interpretation at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, described the Old Testament background against which we should read Mary's song. Sylvia Keesmaat, who teaches similarly important stuff at the Institute of Christian Studies, imaginatively sought to depict Mary's immediate setting as a pregnant, unmarried woman in Israel. Last of all, Bert Polman, Professor of Music at Redeemer and organizer of the conference, gave us a flavor of how the church has sung the Magnificat over the two thousand years of its existence.

Tremendously rich, deep setting for worship

This core of speakers provided a tremendously rich and deep setting for the worship of the church. Just think: this one song taken by the church into its worship still today carries our prayer and praise not just with Mary, but with the Psalmist and Isaiah, whom she echoes, with the women and men of her own time, whose longings she expresses, and with millions of Christian believers who have sung her song to various melodies and languages through the ages. This is ancient stuff, and although the words have been put to different melodies and accompanied (or not) by very different instruments, they remain the same. Without being stale. All through the ages they have kindled intense yearning and hope in those who have heard in them the *Yes* of Yahweh, who revealed his Kingdom most perfectly in his Son.

Slipping into polarities

Given this positive setting, you'd think participants wouldn't slip into the habit of describing inherited traditions and structures as almost by nature a burden, an impediment, an inflexible constriction more prone to inhibit worship than to help it. But that's what happened again and again in conversations, some of which I participated in and some of which I just overheard. (Yes, I was guilty of eavesdropping.) In one workshop a participant argued that we shouldn't approach worship in terms of going to church, a duty, but as an act of praise and thanksgiving, something we do with eager, willing hearts.

This is typical of the polarities we all keep slipping into — and which conferences like this seek to overcome. Many churches develop two contingents: one attracted to a carefully composed liturgy of written responses and music drawn from hundreds of years of congregational singing, the other to an ideal of spontaneous expression, folksiness, skits and contemporary praise choruses. In the middle, of course, there's often a sizeable group who'd just as soon see an end to all the bickering and experimenting and who prefer to worship the way they used to before everyone and his aunt developed an opinion and a cause.

This polarity, and many like it, which emerge in so many congregations also influence the thinking of each of us individually. Actually, this is itself a somewhat polarized way of putting it, because it represents thought as something wholly private which we do in our heads. On other occasions, we speak just as glibly of the spirit of the age or worldview, which is a way of "thinking" shared by huge communities of people, as if we participated in some sort of collective consciousness. With these polar labels we find it easy, all too easy, to paint the way espoused or practised by those "others" to be shallow and devoid of mystery and reverence or formal, unspiritual and lifeless.

The worship service is like a poem

Some years ago I strongly promoted writing liturgies with biblical litanies because I felt that the elements of worship aside from the sermon and songs didn't get enough prominence to allow them to work on us and for us. The worship service is like a poem with a beginning, middle and end. Too many of us were experiencing only the middle, the sermon. A good liturgy draws greater attention to the other actions that go into a fuller act of worship, one that enacts our need for continual conversion and renewal. So, like many others, I was concerned to make things new, to waken myself and my fellow worshippers every week again from our slumbers and deadness of spirit.

But there's another side. A.A. van Ruler in his book, *Why Should I Go to Church?* gives as one of his first answers: *to establish a habit*. He liked to give answers that go against the grain, that challenge our favorite polarities. Going to church out of habit or custom is something we don't regard very highly. You should go to church because you want to with all your heart. Yet, who can deny that there have been times when you dragged yourself out of bed Sunday morning and went to church reluctantly, prodded by things other than an overflowing heart. And afterward you were glad. It helped you. Or not. Things don't always go right.

When my parents died within weeks of one another after years of struggling with Alzheimer's and dementia, I was too rock-bottom tired to muster the attitudes and dredge up the words. Rev. Jan Pereboom was there, however, and did the things he as a minister had learned to do. We were carried along on customs and rituals and by the organized actions of our church family. God is wise. He knows that we need not just each other but also many kinds of structures that are old as the hills of Palestine to carry us through when we lack the inner resources.

There are times when we come to church discouraged, drained, mute, and then the Lord, who knows our weaknesses, gives us words, some very ancient like the Song of Mary, and he gives us structures and rituals that others, perhaps hundreds of years ago, put together, and we join not just with our contemporaries but with the church of all ages to seek God's presence once again to be renewed by his Word and Spirit.

Being an active, alert Christian reader

In this issue of CC we look at some summer reading. Reading has some deep similarities with liturgy. We, as it were, reenact a plot, imaginatively travel roads traced by someone else, often by someone very different from us with very different beliefs. Very few of the books we name in this issue are explicitly Christian. Yet, an active, alert Christian reader comes away from a good novel feeling deepened and enriched by the experience.

Discussions about literature, reading and interpretation over the last few decades have been plagued by polarities very similar to those that haunt debates about worship. Recently I've read a number of essays by Christian thinkers that attack the way certain theories emphasize the input of the reader in the reading experience. They want to uphold the intentions of the author: to read, they say, is to discover what the author wanted to communicate.

A large part of writing, especially of good writing, is a search, a struggle, a groping about in and through the brokenness and density of life in the hope that meaning will emerge. Language and other elements of writing are employed here in unique ways that open the words to a larger resonance. Meanings are suggested, alluded to, so that you are not just *invited* to fill the gaps with your imagination but *required* to if the experience is to make any sense at all.

To suggest that when I read D.H. Lawrence, for example, I'm confined to seeking out just what Lawrence meant is to close down reading prematurely. Those who believe in a Sovereign God who is the Author and Source of all that is good may take it on trust that in every poem and novel on some level the writer is engaged in a search for him who alone is the Fountain of all good. True, in the process writers often stop short. They often pretend that if meaning is not to be found right here within our own finite horizons, it doesn't exist. In the process, however, they are using the structures of language, and words, words that give access to the depths and heights of the human only by resonating with the Word, the Word revealed, the Word that has come to dwell among us, full of grace and truth. Everywhere God's intentions override those of even the most determined unbeliever.

Take up your summer reading, then, in the spirit of a sabbatical, for if you begin there, with your ear already attuned to his Word, then you will hear it echoed in the most surprising places.

Christian Courier

Formerly known as Calvinist Contact
Founded in 1945

An independent biweekly that seeks to: report on significant events in the Christian community and the world; express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective; provide contact for the Christian community.

EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF
Associate Editor: Harry der Nederlanden *ccderned@aol.com*;
Reporter, Layout: Alan Doerksen *ccjournal@aol.com;*
Circulation Manager: Grace Bowman *ccsubscrip@aol.com;*
Accounts Manager: Marsha Emke *ccadpromo@aol.com*

REGIONAL REPORTERS
Jeff Hoogendoorn, Victoria; Jacky Huberts, Langley, B.C.; Stephen VanHelden, Calgary; Gordon Legge, Calgary; Jessie Schut, Edmonton; Valerie Walker, Halifax; Robert VanderVennen, Toronto

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Doug Roorda, Wendy Saunders, Erick Schuringa, Nelly Westerhoff, Bert Witvoet

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact the managing editor if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier.*

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A1
Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838
Fax: (905) 682-8313;
E-mail: cceditor@aol.com
Publications Mail Registration No. 09375

Program helpful for all parents

Thank you for the article on the parenting program "Making the Difference Together/ Effective Parenting." I would like to make a few clarifications. This program is not only for parents and educators having difficulty relating to young people. Many people who take the course take it to enhance already good skills and for the affirmation it gives to parents/educators. It is also helpful for parents of children of any age, including babies and toddlers. Although both the student and the parent component of the program are being offered in many schools throughout Simcoe County, and in some schools in Mississauga, it is not being offered in Burlington's public schools to my knowledge.

Trish Smith
Waterdown, Ont.

Twenty pastors killed in Kaduna riots in Nigeria

Obed Minchakpu

KADUNA, Nigeria (Compass) — Twenty pastors from various church denominations were among the hundreds of Christians killed during the two religious crises that occurred in northern Nigeria's Kaduna city in February and May.

Elder Saidu Dogo, the secretary general of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Northern Nigeria Chapter, said some of the pastors were killed in their churches while others were killed in various parts of the city.

Rev. Fr. Peter Dama, director of social communications of the Archdiocese of Kaduna, told Compass that Father Bello, a Catholic priest, "was ordained last year, just barely a year old in the priesthood. We know that he was attacked by a mob. He was in his sultan-like priestly dress. They dragged him, killed him, tied a rope around his neck and dragged him into a culvert and left him there."

Father Bello came from a Muslim family. His father is a Muslim, and his mother had converted (to Christianity) shortly before the priest's ordination. Fr. Bello was the only male Christian in his family, Dama said.

Rev. Aniya Bobai of the Evangelical Church of West Africa was killed in the church's pastorium in Kaduna city. He was attacked by a Muslim mob, killed, and his church was set ablaze.

The pastors with the Nigerian Baptist Convention were killed at the Kaduna campus of the Baptist Theological Seminary as they attempted to defend the school. All have been buried at the school's cemetery.

Thirty Christians arrested under Islamic law

NIGERIA (Compass) — The Nigerian state of Kano declared itself Islamic with its June 22 adoption of "sharia," the Islamic legal system.

On July 2, thirty Christians were arrested on charges of drinking alcohol, a violation of sharia. On June 20, Kano state Governor Kwankwaso said the time had come for Muslims in Nigeria to assert themselves in the religious life of the country and become the proponents of the Islamic religion. He indicated Christians would not be spared. Prior to the arrests, Muslim extremists had taken over the role of enforcing sharia tenets in the state. They had reportedly been going from street to street attacking Christian women or girls seen with their husbands or parents, claiming that Islam forbids women from being seen in public in the company of men.

With the adoption of sharia in Kano, Nigeria now has four states — Kano, Sokoto, Zamfara and Niger — that have begun full implementation of the Islamic legal system.

Churches will challenge Islamic law

NIGERIA (Compass) — Disturbed by some northern Nigerian states' declaration that they are Islamic and have adopted Islam as the state religion, Nigerian Christian churches have resolved to go to court to challenge what they see as an onslaught on their rights as stated in the constitution. The decision to initiate the court challenge to "sharia" (the Islamic legal system) was made because the federal government said it couldn't be the one to interpret the constitution. Christian-Muslim conflicts resulting from the implementation of sharia over the past year have left hundreds dead.

For a quick Letter to the Editor, please send it by fax to: **(905) 682-8313**, *or by e-mail to:* **cceditor@aol.com**

Manal — widowed at 23: a victim of violence in Nigeria

EL-KOSHEHA, Nigeria (Compass) — They had been hiding in their home for 36 hours, since riots first broke out in their village against Christians on Friday night. Mamduh didn't even go to his grocery shop the next day, afraid to leave his wife Manal and their three little boys home alone.

Just before noon on Sunday, the armed rioters managed to break into their house.

Mamduh was felled with one blow of a rifle butt, knocked unconscious with blood streaming from his head. Manal quickly grabbed the three boys and squeezed them into a tiny cupboard space behind the stairs.

Trembling in fear, they heard furniture being dragged across the floor and out the door. When Manal no longer heard any movements, she ventured out to see part of the house on fire. Mamduh had regained consciousness, but could help little in Manal's efforts to douse the flames.

It wasn't long until the looters returned, forcing the whole family to scramble under the bed in the master bedroom.

One of the raiders promised not to harm them, calmly telling Manal to come over to him. Terrified they would attack her, Mamduh came out from under the bed. The attackers forced Mamduh down the stairs, so Manal followed, scooping up the baby in her arms and the other two boys following. "My husband also pled for mercy," she said. "But one of the men beat him on the head with his gun, and he fell to the floor. I tried to go to him, but they grabbed me by my hair and dragged me out of the house."

'God saved me'

"Then God saved me," she said. A Muslim neighbor who knew her spotted her, and together with two acquaintances, took charge of her and her children, walking them through the streets to the safety of his own home, later escorting them to her father-in-law's home.

COMPASS

Manal and her three boys.

It wasn't until very early the following morning, when she tried to return to her home alone to find her husband, that she learned that after she left Mamduh had been shot dead and his body set afire .

Seeing her alone, two Muslim villagers accosted her on the street, threatening to kidnap her unless she signed with her thumbprint a cheque from her husband's account for 50,000 LE ($14,700). Although she knew such a staggering amount was not in their bank account, she complied. But the moment she turned around, they shot her twice in the back. Her shoulder bone was shattered by a bullet.

"But I could still walk," she said, "so I went a very long way before finally I found an ambulance."

"I know who shot my husband," she admitted. "The neighbors saw them do it. I've told the police the names of all three of them." Recently though, she learned one had been released by the police.

"My brothers are helping me," Manal said. "I am so ashamed to keep living off them. But what can I do? I married when I was 15, and I don't know how to read or write."

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association.
Canada mail: Publications Mail Registration No. 09375. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1.
U.S. mail: Christian Courier (USPS 518-090). Second-class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, Box 110, Lewiston, NY, 14092.

Subcriptions:	**Canada**	**U.S.A.**
(effective Jan. 1, 1999)	(G.S.T. incl.)	(G.S.T. free)
one year (26 issues)	$39.54	$31.60 (US)
two years (52 issues)	$75.00	$60.00 (US)

overseas one year $80.00 surface mail
Advertising deadlines: display advertising: Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. (9 business days before publication date); classified advertising: Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. (9 business days before publication date). See classified pages for more details. Advertising rate sheets available. (ISSN 1192-3415) Published biweekly on Mondays.

Address all correspondence to: 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1. Tel: 905-682-8311 or 1-800-969-4838, or fax: 905-682-8313, e-mail: subscriptions: ccsubscrip@aol.com, advertising: ccadpromo@aol.com

PRINTED IN CANADA

Christians in India demonstrate against violence

HYDERABAD, India (EP) — Thousands of India's Christians took to the streets on July 8, carrying out peaceful demonstrations and rallies in major cities throughout the country as part of "Black Day," a day set aside to remember victims of religious persecution and protest against further violence.

Solidarity among Christian denominations

The nationwide event, which included representatives from other religious minorities, was the biggest display of interdenominational solidarity organized by India's Christian community since December 1998, when demonstrations were also held across the country protesting against a series of brutal attacks on priests, nuns, preachers and Christian institutions.

Dismayed that violence had continued unabated since that time, and that the Indian government had consistently failed to acknowledge the seriousness of the crisis or take effective measures to protect minorities, India's Christian community decided to make a renewed public gesture of protest. Marches, rallies and public meetings were held in several state capitals. These were followed by a rally in Hyderabad on July 9 which drew together a crowd of approximately 100,000.

Various senior church leaders and human rights activists addressed the assembly. The Christian leaders and protestors voiced support for six demands they wanted the Indian government to agree to, including state protection for churches, Christian institutions and properties, and the arrest and charging of all those who had openly engaged in hate campaigns against Christians.

Church bombers arrested in India

BANGALORE, India (Religion Today) — Police in India arrested four Islamic radicals for recent church bombings. Four men belonging to the Deendar Anjuman, a faction of militant Muslims, are in custody in Andhra Pradesh state and five others are being sought for the bombings of several churches in three different states from May 21-July 9, Catholic World News reports.

A bomb blew up in a van carrying several members of the group the same day a Catholic church in Bangalore was attacked. Two people died in the blast and another was taken into custody. Police said the Anjuman sect last year publicly announced its commitment to "spread hatred among different communities." Attacks against Christians have increased since a Hindu government came to power two years ago.

Burlington, Ontario

Maranatha Homes

This award-winning Senior Citizen Homes is located close to Burlington Christian Reformed Church and Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, with audio hook-up for the Sunday services in every apartment from both churches and a weekly evening video church service presentation.

Local bus service at the door. Monthly rent is geared to income.

Information from:
Rosanne van der Woerd, 3260 New Street
Burlington, ON L7N 3L4 905-681-0311

A word from the dark professor

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman

An intimidating professor said one word to me over five years ago, and I think I'm just starting to get an inkling into what he meant.

I was in graduate school for sociology at Queens at the time. I had written a paper on the nature of social theory, and I couldn't decipher some of the professor's comments beside the grade. So, with not a little trepidation, I knocked on his office door.

An intimidating man

As I said, he was an intimidating man. He was a follower of Michel Foucault, a philosopher in league with the masters of suspicion Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche. He dressed like Foucault, too: shaved head, tinted glasses, and black clothes from neck to toe, no matter how hot it was outside. He spoke with a strong, loud voice and a heavy British accent, and I understood about half of what he said — not because of his accent, but because his language was so abstract. He used words like "text" and "state apparatus" and played with names like "Lacan" and "Marcuse." It was a foreign tongue to me.

I sat there and asked for a translation. As we talked, I got the feeling he liked my paper. Strangely, though, he didn't comment on the end of my essay — the section where I discussed worldview, the role of theory in the pursuit of justice, and stewardship — the stuff I had gleaned from my Christian university days. So I asked him directly: "What did you think of that last part?" I pointed to my concluding remarks.

He glanced at the page in question and said one word: "Paternalism."

He then went on to talk more of phenomenology and post-structuralism. My thoughts went elsewhere, and have been ever since. What did he mean by that word?

The underside of care

The word came up again a few years later, again in reference to the Christian university. A Christian university professor was proudly naming the achievements of his yet young academy, and then he suddenly stopped short. "There's one thing that bothers me, though," he said. "It's the sense of paternalism that governs all of student life around here."

He explained this in more detail, explaining how almost every aspect of the student's life was taken care of and directed by the institution. "It's supposed to be a time when they learn to make it on their own," he said.

Merold Westphal in his book *Suspicion and Faith: The Religious Uses of Modern Atheism* contends that often religion's harshest critics can be its best teachers. Often there is a dark underside to some of our most virtuous acts that a suspicious mind helps reveal and explain.

Like the desire to use social theory to care for the world and its people. Like the desire to take care of students and all their needs on our own terms. Caring is an important part of Christian living — no doubt about it — but maybe, the professors are saying, there is a time *not* to care.

Caring, at its worst, can be a way of controlling other people, treating others as if they are all our children. In fact, well-intended caring can breed passivity and fear and stifle imagination, and some may even miss their calling from God while being steered by caring people. People need a space where they are free to make their own choices and make their own mistakes.

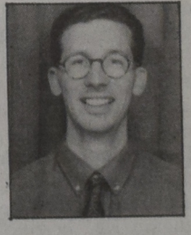
Ironically, not caring can be a way of showing genuine care.

'I'm an adult now'

That's the difference between working with children and with young adults. Students need space to explore and grow and discover life for themselves. We need not abandon them or embrace some ethic of autonomous humanity, but we can certainly give them a nudge out of the nest and hope and pray that they learn to fly on their own.

We can trust them. We can support them on their journey, give guidance when they ask, and help those in personal crisis get back on their feet. University is a place to test new waters and listen for the still small voice of God calling us and gifting us for service in his world, and that may just require a desert experience...

One chorus I repeat on campus continually is that our world belongs to God, and he journeys with us wherever we go. As Christians on campus, we need not be afraid of any lonely road — any theory, any discipline of inquiry, any dark professor's office. His wise and gracious care is sufficient, if we can entrust ourselves to it.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

Yemen Christian faces death sentence

YEMEN (Religion Today) — The life of a Christian charged with apostasy in Yemen still hangs in the balance. George Haji, 27, could face the death penalty for converting from Islam to Christianity, but his sentencing has been delayed twice, according to Compass Direct News.

Haji was scheduled to appear before a court in Tawahi July 12, but for the second time his case was put off, defense attorneys said. It is "in the hands of the attorney general," the presiding judge told Abdulkarim Omarawi, Haji's court-appointed attorney.

Rumors that Haji is to be deported can't be confirmed, Omarawi said, but the fact that authorities are stalling is a good sign. "If they bring him to court, they have to give a judgment. If they don't bring him, and there's no hearing, it means they are ready to send him out."

An out-of court settlement that would allow Haji to leave the country would be good for everyone, Omarawi said.

Survivor not real world

Ron DeBoer

The TV show *Survivor* has unseated *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* as the latest flavor-of-the-month on television. But despite its popularity, *Survivor* typifies the irony in our culture, is painfully predictable, and presents a strange spiritual world that is dark and godless.

The premise of *Survivor* is simple. Producers cast 16 non-actors to survive on an island somewhere near Malaysia. The participants are placed in two tribes which compete against each other for food and to avoid "tribal council," a sort of court where one person from a particular episode's losing tribe gets voted off the island. The last man or woman left on the island after 13 episodes wins a million dollars.

Reality TV nothing new

The idea of "real-life-for-entertainment" didn't begin with *Survivor*. Reality television has been with us for much of the 90s with shows like Fox's *Cops* and MTV's *Real World* and Hollywood itself gave us a glimpse of the present TV world a couple of years back with movies like *The Truman Show* and *EdTV* in which the characters were the "real-life" stars of live television shows. And the Internet, a window to the world, gave us *Jennycam*, the website where Internet users could watch someone named Jenny inside her apartment twenty-four hours a day.

But *Survivor* — and its sister show, *Big Brother*, about a group of strangers placed inside a house loaded with cameras, which debuted in early July – is not "live" television. To call it "reality" television would be stretching it. The shows are edited and packaged for prime time viewing. In *Survivor*'s case, the producers are able to edit the show with the luxury of knowing who will be voted off the island. As it turns out, this is a major flaw of the show. By the middle of each episode, most astute viewers can predict who will be voted off, based on the focus of the camera on certain tribe members.

Nonetheless, audiences are going crazy over the "reality" of the show, but the claim of realism by the producers is wearing thin. How difficult is a scavenger hunt in the jungle when the path is bordered by cameramen?

Producers have admitted to releasing water snakes during certain swimming events to create exciting camera images.

"Characters" who have "partnered" on episode five are nowhere near each other on episode six. And is the behaviour of the islanders ever affected by the presence of the camera? Probably more so than Gilligan and Skipper.

Offspring of literary classics

Let's take a look at a couple of elements of *Survivor* that are alarming. First, it can't be missed that both *Survivor* and *Big Brother* are ironic offspring of literary classics. William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies* — about a group of English choir boys marooned on an island during World War II — has been repeatedly mimicked throughout *Survivor*. George Orwell's *1984*, about a "futuristic" (the book was written in 1948) world where the totalitarian government is referred to as "Big Brother" is obviously the inspiration for CBS's *Big Brother*. That these post-war novels warning us of a world that might become political and military realities if we're not careful are suddenly fodder for entertainment is testament to how "unreal" the culture has become. *Survivor* and *Big Brother* are paradoxes, offering us reality that is constructed. This irony has all but become the norm in television today.

Dark, spiritual imagery

The second thing that alarms me about *Survivor* is the dark, spiritual imagery and underworld-like tone to the show. Drums and tribal cries make up the theme song. The tribes play for the "immunity idol" — a god-like statue each tribe raises triumphantly when an immunity challenge is won, and the final "judgment" (by fellow humans) at tribal council is held in a temple-like structure and is wrought with ritual..

When someone gets voted off the island, he or she walks down a dark pathway, alone and gone for eternity. The producer of the show — much like Regis Philbin on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* — is Zeus-like, a Hollywoodized Prince of Darkness — certainly not God-like — with treasure to pass along to those who successfully pass the tests offered on the road to riches. Sadly, *Survivor* reflects a belief system many — even Christians — follow: I can avoid judgment and earn my reward. The premise is humanistic and hedonistic.

How far will "reality-television" go to achieve the high ratings *Survivor* is presently celebrating? Will it eventually include violence or even "real" death when viewers begin to wise up to the constructed scripts? More importantly, will we continue to offer our patronage to the advertisers paying big dollars to keep *Survivor* on the air?

Harry Potter won't go to school at Canterbury

GEORGE RODGER, MAGNUM; COURTESY NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The interior of England's Canterbury Cathedral.

CANTERBURY, England (Religion Today) — Sorry, Harry Potter, your witchcraft isn't working on Canterbury Cathedral. Anglican authorities last week said they would not allow Warner Brothers to portray the medieval English church as the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in a movie the company is making of J.K. Rowlings' children's book series about the boy wizard.

"We had to be sensitive to the feeling of some Christians that there is something anti-Christian in these books," Christopher Robinson, the cathedral's spokesman, told Religion News Service. "We have to be sensitive to all shades of opinion."

Some conservative Christians object to the books' use of magic and the occult, and to its frightening passages. But others, including the conservative magazine *First Things* and the evangelical magazine *Christianity Today*, have voiced support for the books, RNS reported.

The series has sold 35 million copies worldwide and has been translated into 40 languages. The fourth volume, called *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, was published last week. Three volumes of the saga are yet to be written.

"I don't believe in witchcraft, in the sense that they're talking about, at all. I'm certainly not a witch myself," Rowlings told The Associated Press. "I think it's a source of great fun, drama. Magic is going to be a theme of children's literature as long as the human race exists."

Governments and corporations seek way to childproof the Internet

(Religion Today) — Twenty-five million children are playing and learning online — and they need protection from harmful materials, a U.S. congressional committee was told.

Leaders of Internet companies and government agencies grappled with the problem last month as part of a federal committee created by the Child Online Protection Act. It is holding three hearings this summer to lay out the range of technologies and methods that, its members say, hold great promise for blocking sexually explicit materials and thwarting online predators. The committee will report to the U.S. Congress in November.

William Parker of Crosswalk.com, an interdenominational Christian site, is a member of the committee. Crosswalk.com offers a filter for harmful, unwanted Internet content. The filter is available on the site.

The hearings come at a time when children are getting online at an unprecedented rate. Their numbers have tripled, from 8 million since 1997, according to Grunwald Associates, a San Mateo, Calif., research company. The number of children online will increase an additional 70 per cent by 2005, the company predicts, as more parents buy computers and encourage their children to log on as an educational tool.

One out of five children age 10 to 17 who uses the Internet is regularly exposed to unwanted sexual solicitations, a study conducted by the University of New Hampshire found. Sexual solicitations on the Internet come from other children as well as pedophiles.

Parker and others on the panel say that families should continue to make Internet decisions with help from technology, rather than rely on the government to make decisions for them. "Technology is our answer — government solutions will not work," Jerry Berman of the Center for Democracy & Technology told the committee.

Church

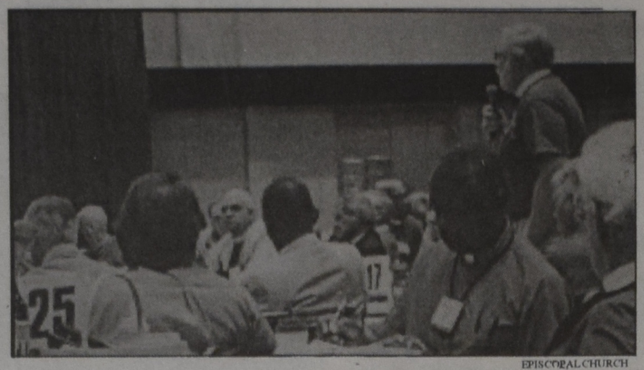
Episcopal convention draws back from approving same-sex marriages

CC Staff with files from Episcopal Church

DENVER, Colo. — The potentially most divisive item on the agenda for the convention of the Episcopal Church, held in Denver, Colorado, July 4 - 16 dealt with the place of homosexuals in the church. A strong contingent in the church are in favor not only of sanctifying same-sex unions but also of ordaining non-celibate homosexuals into the priesthood.

After long, passionate, and sometimes acrimonious debate, however, the proposed measures were defeated – but only by a narrow margin.

The convention recognized that "life-long committed relationships" other than marriage can be founded on fidelity and monogamy, but a resolution that would have called for the preparation of rites to permit the church to express liturgical support did not pass. A resolution calling for the presiding bishop to appoint a special theology committee to continue the study and conversation on issues of human sexuality, in consultation with the Committee on Pastoral Development, was passed.



EPISCOPAL CHURCH

During the debate, Gordon Charlton, a retired Bishop from Texas, claimed the resolution put common law arrangements between heterosexual couples on the same plane as holy matrimony. "While holy matrimony is the church's clear preference as the only acceptable alternative for homosexual persons," he said, "it is clearly not required for Christian people any longer."

Charles Duvall (Central Gulf Coast) said the resolutions on sexuality, even without the one directing the preparation of liturgical rites for same-sex unions, is still a major shift in church thinking. They recognize "that there are people who live differently than the stated teaching of the church. That's a fairly significant admission," he said.

The fact that three denominations with which Episcopalians are seeking closer communion – the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church, and the United Methodist Church – all recently adopted resolutions opposing same-sex unions may also have influenced the outcome.

Ordination of women approved

Over the resistance of some of its dioceses, the convention moved to make the ordination of women mandatory. This brought complaints that those who follow the Catholic wing of the church are being subjected to persecution.

The Rev. Dorsey McConnell (Olympia) said, "It feels to me like there's a new spirit of legalism in the church, and that this resolution is a hammer. It seems to me that hearts are opened by being warmed, not hammered."

An agreement introducing full communion with Evangelical Lutherans passed easily. A similar proposal had been approved three years ago but the latter had to be rewritten before the Lutheran church approved it a few months ago. It is the culmination of over 30 years of discussion between the two denominations.

Among other actions, the Episcopalian convention passed a resolution:

- encouraging the Boy Scouts to admit homosexual leaders.
- urging the removal of handguns and assault weapons from homes.
- calling for debt relief for poor nations.
- warning against the dangers of globalization.
- opposing private school vouchers.

The Episcopal Church does operate private schools in some dioceses, so some voices were raised in favor of vouchers, if they were implemented with care. However, the argument that vouchers contribute to white flight form the inner cities carried the day.

Baptist leaders meet with Fidel Castro

CC staff (with files from the BWA, Compass Direct and Religion Today)

HAVANA, Cuba — Leaders of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), convening in Havana, Cuba July 3 to 8 met with Fidel Castro on the final day of the historic assembly. It was the first international Baptist convention to be held there. Two public rallies held in a sports stadium drew over 3,000 people, and evangelistic services were held simultaneously in 40 Baptist churches.

The BWA represents over 43 million Baptists worldwide. More than 400 participants from 60 countries took part in the international gathering. Cuba is home to about 35,000 Baptists; they form the largest Protestant group in the country.

Cuban Baptists invited the BWA to Havana. "For many years, due to ideological struggles around the world, Cuban Baptists had been cut off from many brothers and sisters. Therefore, it is with great joy that we have accepted their kind invitation," BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz said. Castro allowed 50,000 Bibles to be shipped into the country and distributed to Protestant groups after a 1998 visit by BWA leaders. The group has sent medicine, food, and other aid to Cuba's churches.

Castro recognizes influence of religion

Lotz said the July 8 meeting with Castro signals the Cuban government's growing recognition of Baptists' influence as the largest evangelical group in Cuba. Castro "understands religion can play a significant role in the life of people, in Cuban society and even in helping international relations," Lotz added.

General Council members adopted a resolution encouraging "initiatives to ease sanctions on food and medicine affecting the people of Cuba." Addressing the practice of economic sanctions in general, the resolution describes access to food and medicine as "a basic human right," adding, "The denial of such access should not be used by nations as a tool of geopolitics."

Despite the United States government's 40-year trade embargo of Cuba following Castro's ascent to power, BWA leaders insist the resolution rises above international political concerns. "We're concerned not with the government, but with the people of Cuba," Lotz explained. "We are concerned with those who are suffering."

Emphasizing that BWA participants "were not here to affirm any ideology or government, but to affirm the people of Cuba," Lotz said the resolution opposing economic boycotts recognizes that "the Cuban people are the ones suffering from the boycott." Withholding food and medicine from people in need "should not be used as a form of government policy," he insisted.

Talking, not sniping

Lotz described conversations with government leaders as a form of "pre-evangelism." Noting that Baptist leaders were able to tell Castro that "Baptists believe in the separation of church and state and are concerned about the spiritual conversion of people," the BWA leader added, "It's much better to talk than to snipe at one another."

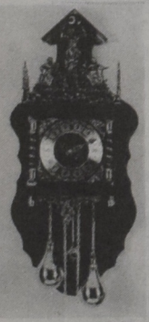
Lotz said the BWA meeting in Havana and the dialogue with Castro "give credibility and visibility to Cuban Baptists which is very significant for a minority movement." Cuban Baptists have more than 400 congregations and 900 mission sites, with a total of 38,000 baptized believers in a nation of 10.8 million people.

Fidel Castro, 73, said last week that Jesus Christ "was a communist," referring to Christ's choice of humble fishermen from the Sea of Galilee to be his first disciples, according to news reports.

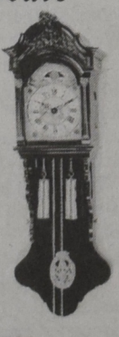
Cubans still experience shortages of every kind. The system of rationing has virtually given way to a parallel economy conducted in American dollars, a practice allowed by Castro since 1993, when the economy almost collapsed. Since the top salary for state employees is only about $20 (US) per month, many goods are out of reach for the average Cuban consumer.

It's one more thing that adds to the church's suffering. "The big worry is, what are we going to eat tomorrow?" a pastor explained. But he quickly added that he's seen God's hand amid the shortages. "We pray for everything from shoes to transportation to food. I've seen God's mercy in sustaining my family. It isn't easy. I can't just go out and buy a pair of shoes, but God is great. He provides."

Celebrate your Dutch heritage with quality time and unique clocks.



Choose from a wonderful selection of imported quality clocks from Holland. Frisian, Zaanse, Amsterdamse & 18th century French style clocks, all uniquely hand crafted.



Bakelaar Jewellers Limited

Canadian Diamonds EDITION 2000

A family business serving the community since 1967.
Specializing in: Diamonds, Fine Quality Jewellery, Watches, Imported Dutch Clocks, Jewellery and Clock Repairs.

160 Main St. W.
Listowel, Ontario N4W 3H2

Phone: 519-291-3280
Fax: 519-291-4211

Church attendance bottoming out? Pad the pew

(Religion Today) — Companies that restore or replace church pews say that at least half of the orders are for cushioned seating, compared with 20 per cent five years ago, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Cushions can cost as much as the pews themselves.

That doesn't sit well with church traditionalists. "I think a church should be austere," said Rev. Dexter Kessler of the newly built Episcopal Church of the Advent in Palm City, Fla. He said he knows that worshippers, especially some of the older ones, like thick cushions on the oak pews.

Theatre seats account for about 15 per cent of all new church seating, up from about three per cent in 1990. That, too, is controversial, because some Christians say chairs detract from the communal worship experience and keep children from resting their heads in parents' laps, the *Journal* reported. "A lot of churches are agonizing about this," says Douglas Graber, a salesman at Sauder Manufacturing Co., a pew maker in Ohio.

Padded church seating was almost unheard of 50 years ago. Many churches didn't even offer seating, except to the sick and elderly, until the 1500s, and before that, most people stood and kneeled on the floor. Roman Catholicism and the early Anglican churches didn't believe in making congregations too comfortable, and some of their churches today have unpadded kneeling rails. American Puritanism tended to reject the soft life in church even more, partly to emphasize its break with Catholicism.

Divine and human eyes

Chapter & Verse
Al Wolters

"They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." (Zech 4:10, NIV)

Sometimes one of the most effective commentaries on a Bible verse is a true story of how it played a role in a believer's life. Here is such a story.

"Brenda was a young woman who was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was scared to death, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff. In spite of her fear, she put on the gear, took a hold on the rope, and started up the face of that rock.

Blurry and all-seeing eyesight

She got to a ledge where she could take a breather. As she was hanging on there, the safety rope snapped against Brenda's eye and knocked out her contact lens. Well, here she is on a rock ledge, with hundreds of feet below her and hundreds of feet above her. Of course she looked and looked and looked, hoping it had landed on the ledge, but it just wasn't there. Here she was, far from home, her sight now blurry. She was desperate and began to get upset, so she prayed to the Lord to help her to find it.

When she got to the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found. She sat down, despondent, with the rest of the party, waiting for the rest of them to make it up the face of the cliff. She looked out across range after range of mountains, thinking of that Bible verse that says, 'The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth.' She thought, 'Lord, you can see all these mountains. You know every stone and leaf, and you know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me.'

Finally, they walked down the trail to the bottom. At the bottom there was a new party of climbers just starting up the face of the cliff. One of them shouted out, 'Hey you guys! Anybody lose a contact lens?'

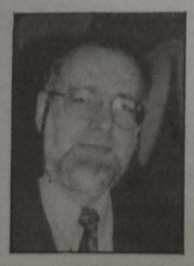
God appointed an ant

Well, that would be startling enough, but you know why the climber saw it? An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock, carrying it.

Brenda told me [the writer of this story] that her father is a cartoonist. When she told him the incredible story of the ant, the prayer, and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens with the words, 'Lord, I don't know why you want me to carry this thing. I can't eat it, and it's awfully heavy. But if this is what you want me to do, I'll carry it for you.'"

The author who wrote up this story adds the following comment. "I think it would probably do some of us good to occasionally say, 'God, I don't know why you want me to carry this heavy load. I can see no good in it and it's awfully heavy. But, if you want me to carry it, I will.' God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called."

This story illustrates another verse in the Bible as well, where these words from Zechariah are also echoed – and then expanded: "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, *to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him*" (2 Chron. 16:9). The all-seeing eyes of God look out for the interests of his people.



Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. The above story is attributed to Josh and Karen Zarandona.

Catholic missionaries make converts to Orthodox faith

ETHIOPIA (Religion Today) — Catholic missionaries in Ethiopia are in trouble for sending people to the Orthodox Church. Owen Lambert and Brendan Cogavin, members of the Holy Ghost Fathers missionary order working in Gamo Gofa province, have been censured by their superiors for encouraging people to convert to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

More than half the population of Ethiopia is Orthodox and it makes sense to let people follow their cultural and national traditions, Lambert and Cogavin say, according to Catholic News Service. "If Orthodox priests tried to come to [the Irish region of] Connermara — what on earth would people think of them?" Lambert said.

The Spiritans, as they are also known, adapted themselves to the Orthodox culture after arriving in 1972, studying Orthodox theology, learning the language, and encouraging Orthodox vocations. They contribute to training programs for Orthodox priests and influence Orthodox seminaries, CNS reported.

Catholic leaders in Ethiopia and the Vatican have criticized them for failing to promote Catholicism. "There are people there who want to become Catholics, and these priests are not responding to their needs," Archbishop Marcello Zago said. Some Orthodox leaders are suspicious of the priests, too, regarding all missionaries as "sheep stealers."

Eastern and Western church leaders begin talks

EMMITSBURG, Maryland (Religion Today) — Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox leaders are seeking common ground. Church leaders from around the world began 10 days of meetings July 9 in Emmitsburg, Md., the first gathering of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. The meetings are taking place at Mount St. Mary's college and Seminary.

Organizers say emotional arguments over property rights and proselytizing have diverted the discussion. They want to concentrate on theological issues such as methods of worship and taking Holy Communion, according to The Associated Press. The session originally was scheduled for June 1999 but was postponed due to religious tensions provoked by NATO's attacks on Kosovo.

Full reconciliation is unlikely at this meeting, but will likely take much more time, organizers said. The two branches of the Christian faith are split by a 946-year-old disagreement over issues including the Pope's jurisdiction.

CRC church to become mosque

PALOS HEIGHTS, Ill. (EP) — Reacting to news that a Muslim group planned to convert a church into a mosque, the city council of Palos Heights, Ill., voted to pay the group $200,000 to drop its plan. Mayor Dean Koldenhoven vetoed the measure, calling it "fiscally irresponsible" and an insult to Muslims.

The town's 450 Muslim families agreed to purchase a Christian Reformed church for $2.1 million, but have met resistance in this predominantly white and Christian south Chicago suburb.

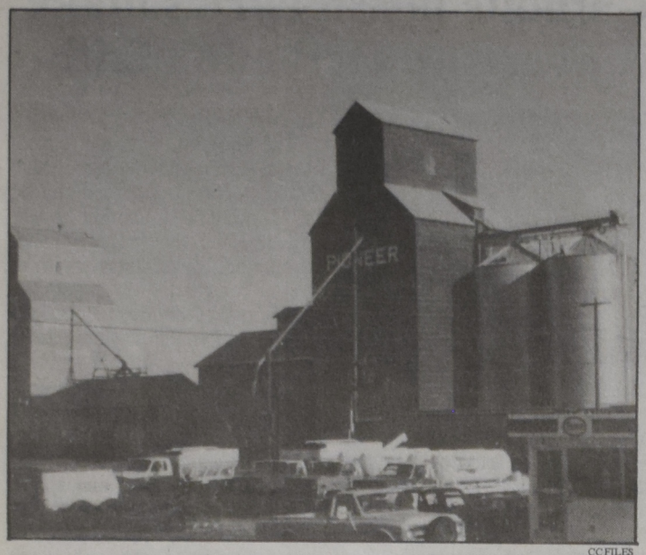
Zimbabwean archbishop fears for life after rebuke by Mugabe

HARARE, Zimbabwe (ENI) — A Catholic archbishop fears for his life after being blamed, by Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, for the ruling party's poor results in Matabeleland, in western Zimbabwe, during last month's parliamentary elections. Out of the 24 parliamentary seats for the west of the country, Zanu PF, Robert Mugabe's party, retained only two.

Commenting on the results after the elections, held June 24 and 25, President Mugabe publicly singled out Archbishop Pius Ncube, blaming him for the defeat of Zanu PF in the region.

Agriculture

Location, location, location!



CC FILES

"Family farms have a long pattern of growth — a lean-to one year, a silo the next."

Elbert van Donkersgoed

In the mid '80s, my family tore itself away from our elegant and spacious home in small town Ontario and settled for a tub of concrete, a condo townhouse in a city suburb. It stretched our budget to move into less house in the city — much less house.

We learned a simple lesson that year: the value of a piece of land, and the building or facility on it, is based on three fundamental considerations — location, location, location.

Location — as on what street? Is your house close to a school? Is your donut shop on a street with growing morning commuter traffic, yet not so busy that cars risk creating traffic jams when they jockey to get over to your take-out window? Have all the homes up and down your street been upgraded and thereby increased the value of yours?

Right side of the tracks?

Location — as in what part of town? Is your house located "on the right side of the tracks?" Is there a critical mass of office workers in the immediate area that will support your lunchtime restaurant? Does this industrial subdivision have high-speed telephone lines that can support your business-to-business Internet start-up?

Location — as in which community? Does your village have easy access to Ontario's transportation backbone, the 401? Is your town within commuting distance of Toronto? Does your city have the cultural amenities necessary to enchant professional folks?

Location, location, location is coming to rural Ontario.

As we adopt the technology that leads to the megafarm, place will matter.

Zoning and bylaws

A new megabarn will require a zoning that is specifically for large-scale livestock operations. Irrigation will call for a sub-watershed with ample stream flow. A fourth greenhouse in a row will need a bylaw that specifically allows more than 20 per cent of land to be covered with structures. Adding value by processing or direct marketing will entail land set aside to reinforce the bonds between cities and their hinterlands.

Family farms have a long pattern of growth — a lean-to one year, a silo the next — gradual growth, a doubling of production every 20 years. And it all happened right where we started, right on the home farm.

No more! As we approach megafarm technology new questions arise. Is it the right road? Is it the right watershed? Is it the right zone? Is it the right township?

No more expansion wherever we happen to be farming. Today farm expansion choices are intentional: location, location, location.

Elbert van Donkersgoed is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario.

The spirit of immigrants

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

An immigration agent reporting from Calgary in December, 1887, gave the total number of immigrants registered by him for the year to be 309. He added that he may have missed a few, because he was "sick during the months of May and June on account of having been seriously wounded by a bullet" (*When the Work's All Done This Fall* by Dave McIntosh, Stoddart, 1989, p. 263).

That terse statement says a good deal about the pioneer spirit of immigrants, both past and present, which is still having an impact on Alberta. Indomitable people who saw only a bleak future in their homeland gained a foothold in a land with abundant space, fuel, building materials and other material goods.

Most Albertans either immigrated here or have recent ancestors who did so. My American-born parents arrived here with their respective parents early in this century to take advantage of the offer of cheap farm land. My grandparents had previously emigrated to the United States from Norway and Denmark.

Ethnically diverse farming community

I grew up in an ethnically diverse farming community. Most of my schoolmates were either Danish or Slovakian in origin, with a smattering of various other ethnic groups. Most of them were bilingual. My parents, though they were American-born, spoke no English until they started school. The mothers of some of my friends never did learn to speak English.

There were a number of Hungarian bachelors who journeyed to southern Alberta in the 1920s to make enough money to return home and buy a farm. Unfortunately, the depression came along soon after, stranding the men here. They subsisted by herding sheep and hoeing beets, jobs that most people were able to avoid.

During World War II, allegedly for security reasons, the government concentrated Japanese immigrants in camps in Southern Alberta. Many of them stayed after the war and became very successful farmers and business people.

Prisoners of war in Canada

During that war, to assist short-handed farmers, German prisoners of war were let out from prison camps. It worked out well. There were three who lived with us for several years. All prisoners were required to return to Germany after the war, though many did not want to. A few disappeared, melting into Canadian society. Some younger ones were able to emigrate back to Canada.

After the war there was a late influx of Hollanders into Canada, and again my father employed several of them. About 13 years later I was fortunate to marry a special girl who had come with her family from the Netherlands in 1951.

Scots were the supposed international experts on sheep. A Scottish sheepherder employed by my father thought so too. But he lost his job when he told Dad he had forgotten more than my dad ever knew about sheep.

Every little town had a cafe operated by Chinese people, often a solitary male who had by force of circumstances left wife and children in China. Cow camps had Chinese cooks. Some Chinese were successful market gardeners on the river flats of Medicine Hat.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Our society is not just a hodge-podge of international influence, but a product of people with high ideals and strong determination.

Industrious, daring entrepreneurs

The Canadian government and large companies such as the CPR were responsible for the greatest influx of settlers. These eager agriculturists cleared land of trees and plowed virgin sod, established farms and ranches and produced commodities essential to the economic viability of Canada. Since then, successive waves of people coming to Canada brought unique contributions to our national psyche and our productive capacity. Generally immigrants are industrious and daring entrepreneurs. They see opportunities and put considerable energy into taking advantage of them.

In the rural school I attended, drop-outs were common around grade eight. Children were needed on the farm and some parents saw no need for further education for farmers. Today my schoolmates from that small cultural melting pot of a rural school include a few farmers, but they range the full gamut of occupations. Among them I can think of teachers, homemakers, musicians, entertainers, lawyers, a judge, published authors, preachers, a bishop, politicians, a cabinet minister, professors, a geologist and civil servants.

The large majority of those immigrants and their children, I realize now more than then, were highly-motivated people. Their work ethic was strong and so was their sense of responsibility. Many of them were hyphenated pioneers such as Danish Lutherans and Catholic Slovakians. For some, such as Mennonites and Jews, the ethnic and the religious blurred together.

All of us benefit from pioneering immigrants whether they be our own ancestors or others. Our society is not just a hodge-podge of international influence, but a product of people with high ideals and strong determination. We will honor them not by blindly following their example, but by discovering where to go from here and courageously moving ahead as did they.

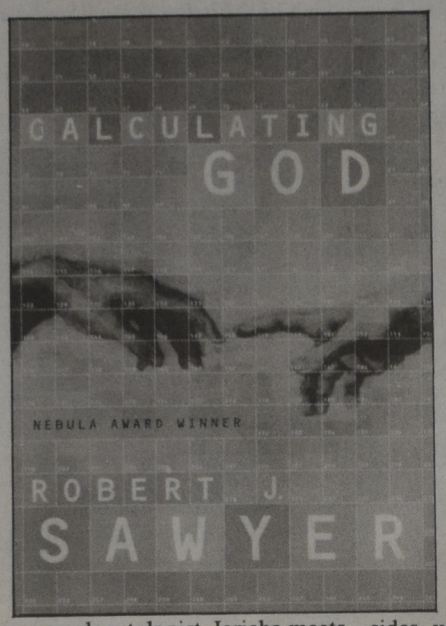
Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

Book asks: Is there a 'smoking gun' to prove God's existence?

Calculating God

by Robert J. Sawyer

New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2000
ISBN: 0-312-86713-1, 334 pp., $34.95 Can.
Reviewed by Alan Doerksen



If an approaching disaster threatened earth and other life-bearing planets, would God prevent it? This is one of many challenging questions asked in *Calculating God*, the new science fiction thriller by Toronto writer Robert Sawyer.

The story centres around Dr. Thomas Jericho, a paleontologist at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), and a staunch atheist. His name seems to indicate his doubts about God and the wall he has built around himself to protect his firm belief in evolution. For Jericho, evolution is almost a religion. He has built his career around it, and has often debated against creationists.

Disbelief in God shaken

But as the story develops, Jericho's disbelief in God is shaken by a series of events. First of all, an alien named Hollus arrives at the ROM, demanding to see a paleontologist. Jericho meets with the alien, and finds out that Hollus and her fellow aliens believe that God exists and can be proven scientifically.

But Jericho is not easily convinced. It takes several climactic events to make him think seriously about God. One is the onset of lung cancer. As Jericho sees his life threatened, he starts to value his family more than before and starts questioning whether there is a God who can help him. In one fragile moment, he struggles to pray, but quickly stops as his wife and son return home. Jericho's wife is a Christian and a church-goer, but the couple rarely talk about faith issues together. His wife and young son are portrayed in a sensitive way and show the softer, sympathetic side of Jericho, who is rough around the edges as a scientist.

Even though she is an alien, Hollus is developed well as a character, and establishes a close bond with Jericho. She even sides with him in an argument against one of Jericho's adversaries.

The question of God's existence permeates the book. Jericho has an ongoing debate with Hollus about whether or not there is a God, and what is the nature of God and the universe. But a stumbling block for Jericho is that he's looking for solid proof — he needs to see a "smoking gun" which proves God's existence once and for all.

As the story reaches its climax, Jericho witnesses an event which may be the smoking gun he is looking for. He also starts to see the flaws in his belief in the *theory* of evolution.

Pro-life terrorists

A subplot to the story tells of two pro-life terrorists, who have just blown up a Toronto abortion clinic and now plan to destroy a fossil collection at the ROM. The author portrays these characters as two-dimensional right-wing fundamentalist Christians, with clicheed southern accents. Christian readers may be offended by how the author paints these characters as justifying their actions in the name of God. They claim that God created fossils as fakes to test people's faith in six-day creation.

Another aspect of the book which may offend Christians is the use of God's and Jesus' names in the wrong way. Jericho often swears and uses God's name flippantly, which is a reflection of his disbelief.

For readers who don't mind having their faith challenged, this book is a thought-provoking look at the question of God's existence. It deals with such basic questions as: Why is there suffering in the world (such as cancer)? Was the formation of life an accident or a controlled event? Can humans (or other life forms) communicate with God? Will God intervene to save his creatures in the face of a great catastrophe?

Robert Sawyer is a Toronto-based writer who is proud to set this story in Toronto. In a recent interview with the Canadian Press, he explained, "When I started out as a Canadian writer, everybody told me, 'Don't set your stuff in Canada if you want to sell it in the States.' .... This was like the received wisdom handed down from generation to generation. And I just didn't think that it had been tested, and maybe that's what *Calculating God* is about, seeing if you can test things that are articles of faith. I thought I would be just as blatantly Canadian as I could until someone told me I had to stop." Canadian it is, including several digs at the cutback-prone Harris government of Ontario.

Sawyer has written 12 sci-fi books, and has previously won the sci-fi Nebula Award.

New Marshall book reads like a devotional and thriller

Heaven is Not My Home: Learning to Live in God's Creation

by Paul Marshall with Lela Gilbert

Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998
269 pp., $17.99 US.
Reviewed by Gideon Strauss

Heaven is Not My Home is unlike anything else Paul Marshall has ever written. It talks the language of everyday people, not the language of the academic specialist or political activist. It breathes a spirit of adventure. It reads like a devotional in places and like a thriller in others.

Consider some of the vignettes drawn from Marshall's own life: scuba-diving through a swirling school of barracudas; kicking a soccer ball along the cliffs of Scotland's Inner Hebrides Islands; eating a succulent lobster dinner in a church basement; celebrating a miraculous Easter vigil in the city of Minsk.

Sadly, Christians often give the impression that they abhor the world in which they live and cannot wait for either their own private passage to heaven or a public Armageddon blasting the whole kit and caboodle to hell and gone. Marshall counters this expression and explains why such otherworldliness does no one any good:

Why be creative?

"If we think that the earth and everything on it is simply going to disappear, why labor long and hard to write something, build something, create something that will only be consumed by fire? If we think that being human is only a passing phase of life, why take the present seriously? Why not regard ourselves merely as apprentice angels, stuck for the moment in an earthly waiting room but better suited to and anxiously awaiting life on some disembodied, heavenly plane?"

Marshall offers a different Christian understanding of our place in the world: he argues that humanity is designed to take care of the world — to be "stewards of creation":

"Caring for creation extends far beyond the boundaries of earth, oceans, sky and clouds. We human beings, we *ourselves*, are part of creation. Our stewardship includes human life as well as the rest of nature. It includes Mozart as well as mountains; parliaments as well as porpoises; friendships as well as fields and forests.... Creation includes culture as well as nature. And although the entire creation has been corrupted by sin, it still remains the realm over which we have been given responsibility."

If this is our place in the world, how should we respond to our situation? Marshall answers this question with four short, insight-packed chapters: on learning, on work, on rest and on play.

In his chapter on work, Marshall recognizes that: "... when we go to the factory or the office, field or school, most of us are not in charge of the way we work. We don't set the hours, we don't divide the responsibilities, we don't establish the goals. Usually we're just supposed to fit in with what is already there, with someone else's plan and vision."

Nonetheless, argues Marshall, "... those of us that can must seek to restructure work so that it can really and honestly be an expression of our service and calling. We need to shape our workplaces and organizational structures so that people can exercise genuine responsibility and be treated as God's responsible image-bearers. This means we should concentrate on good, useful work and turn away from the notion that people are simply commodities to be bought and sold in a 'labor' market."

Four sets of human tasks

How wide do our responsibilities in the world stretch? Marshall talks about four sets of human tasks in the world: the care of the natural world, political responsibility, imagination and the arts, and creativity and technology.

Drawing on his earlier argument that human beings are designed for life on earth, and that Christians must therefore not abhor but cherish the earth, Marshall finishes his book with a grand statement of hope over several chapters. He encourages us to take our daily work seriously, since: "... our works, here and now, are not all transitory. The good that we have done will not simply disappear and be forgotten. This world is not a passing and futile phase; it will be taken up in God's new world. Our good buildings, our great inventions, our acts of healing, our best writings, our creative art, our finest clothes, our greatest treasures will not simply pass away. If they represent the finest works of God's image-bearers, they will adorn the world to come."

One of the endorsements on the dust jacket commends *Heaven is Not My Home* to "all who are bold enough to ask what life in this world is about." For anyone trying to follow a way of life guided by the Christian worldview, this book will do the same job as that first shot of coffee in the morning: wake us up, cheer us up, and get us going.

For many Christians, it will open up a whole new world of previously unimagined possibilities. And for people curious about Christianity from the outside, it will offer an intriguing glimpse of the view from the inside.

I can read!

Collected and reviewed by Jeanette Romkema

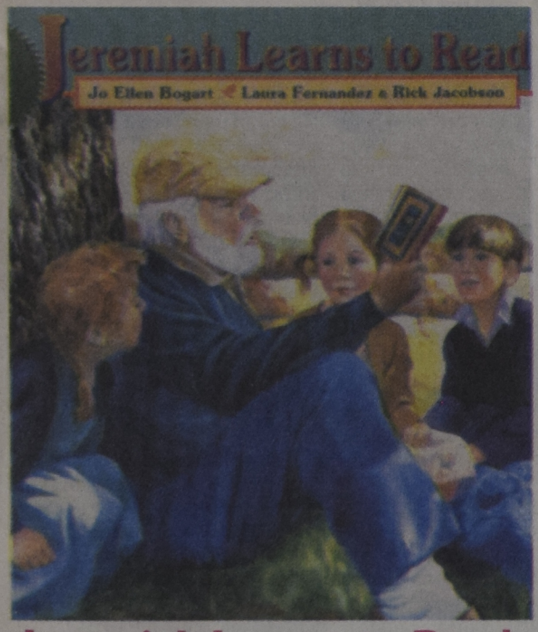
I can remember closing my eyes and desperately asking God, "Please, don't let the teacher choose me to read. PLEASE!" Once in a while my plea would be answered, probably more because the teacher saw the fear in my eyes than God agreeing that this was a valid request, but I was usually forced through the humiliation of stammering and stumbling through part of a story. These are unpleasant memories I prefer to forget.

Literacy opens up worlds to those who can claim this skill. Unfortunately a large percentage of the world is illiterate. I am a long way from my elementary school fears of reading and now enjoy the knowledge, wisdom and outlets for my imagination books offer me, but it took a great deal of determination to overcome many obstacles. The books I have selected for this collection are examples of similar stories and offer inspiration to both young and old.

Aunt Chip and the Great Triple Creek Dam Affair

written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco
New York: Philomel Books, 1996
ISBN 0-399-22943-4 40pp
Fiction picture book for primary and older grades.

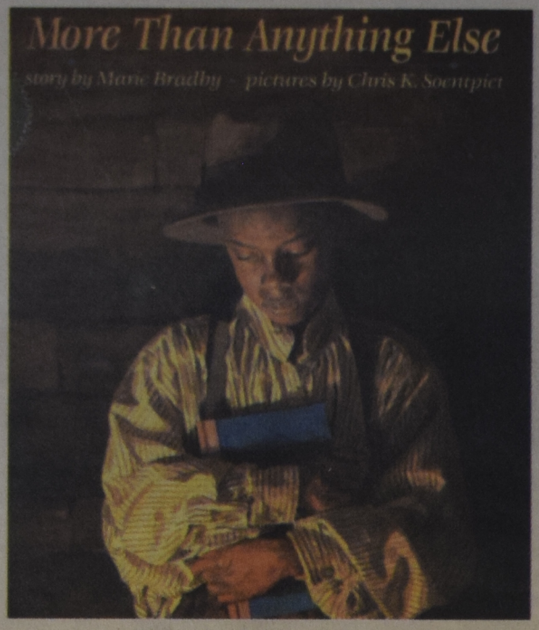
What happens when the only thing people want to do is watch TV? What happens when libraries close? What happens when people stop reading? Aunt Chip has taken to bed in protest of the social changes and has not gotten up in the last fifty years. She is certain there will be consequences but when she finds out that no one knows how to read she is driven to the streets to take action. One of the great storytellers in children's literature Patricia Polacco uses her masterful skills to raise important questions about literacy, books and the changing world we live in. A thought-provoking book.



Jeremiah Learns to Read

written by Jo Ellen Bogart, illustrated by Laura Fernandez & Rick Jacobson
Toronto: North Winds Press, 1997
ISBN 0-590-24927-4 32pp
Fiction picture book for all ages.

Jeremiah is a loving husband, father and grandfather. He can make maple syrup from sap, read animal prints in the snow and tell the best stories for miles. He can do many things and everybody loves him, but there is one thing he cannot do: he doesn't know how to read. This is a heart-warming story of courage, determination and humility. Empowering for beginner readers of all ages.



More Than Anything Else

written by Marie Bradby, illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet
New York: Orchard Books, 1995
ISBN 0-531-09464-2 32pp
Fiction picture books for ...?

It is 1865 and Brooker T. Washington works in the saltworks shoveling salt into barrels with the rest of his family. More than anything else he wants to read. "I think about the hunger still in my head — reading. I have seen some people — young and old — do it. I am nine years old and I know, if I had a chance, I could do it, too." This hunger is finally relieved when his mother offers him an alphabet book and someone enters his life who can read. Told from a time when life for Afro-Americans was cruel and unjust this realistically illustrated story offers a glimpse into a young boy's struggles towards literacy, and self-worth. This is a tale of courage, and determination.

Read for Me, Mama

written by Vashanti Rahaman, illustrated by Lori McElrath-Eslick
Hondesdale: Boyds Mills Press, 1997
ISBN 1-56397-313-8 32pp
Fiction picture book for primary – junior grades.

Joseph is learning to read. On Thursdays he runs home from his weekly visit to the library and asks his mother to share his books with him, but she is always too busy. It is not until Joseph is in church and hears her mother ask God to help her learn to read that he realizes why she has been refusing his request. Once her secret is uncovered they can embark on the road towards literacy together. A moving story about the shame and fear attached to not being able to read, told with sensitive text and bold oil paintings.

The Girl Who Hated Books

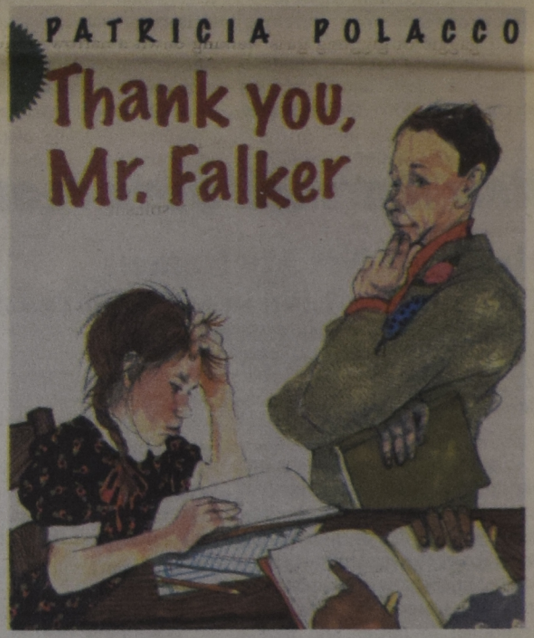
written by Manjusha Pawagi, illustrated by Leanne Franson
Toronto: Second Story Press, 1998
ISBN 1-89674-11-8 24pp
Fiction picture book for primary to junior grades.

What do you do when your house is littered with books and every dresser, drawer, closet and sink is full of them? What do you do when you hate to read and your parents keep buying more and more books? Although young Meena tries not to think about reading she experiences the power of text when she must find a home for some book characters who have lost their literary home. A playful story about a little girl who enters the world of literature, never to be the same.

Thank you, Mr. Falker

written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco
New York: Philomel Books, 1998
ISBN 0-399-23166-8 40pp
Fiction picture book for primary – intermediate grades.

To introduce the excitement of learning Grandpa drizzled honey on the cover of a small book and asks his granddaughter to taste it. "'Sweet!' Then all of the family said in a single voice, 'Yes, and so is knowledge, but knowledge is like the bee that made that sweet honey, you have to chase it through the pages of a book!'" But young Trisha never dreams that the road would be so difficult and so painful. This autobiographical story is close to Patricia Polacco's heart and is her way of saying "thank you" to a very special teacher. A remarkable story by a remarkable author/illustrator.



The Wednesday Surprise

written by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Donald Carrick
New York: Clarion Books, 1989
ISBN 0-89919-721-3 32pp
Fiction picture book for primary – junior grades.

Anna and Grandma have a secret. Every Wednesday afternoon while everyone is out of the house they read together. When it is Dad's birthday they give an incredible gift to everyone: with her granddaughter's assistance Grandma has learned to read. This heart-warming story tells the intergenerational message that we are never to old to change or too young to teach. The richness of Bunting's text and soft character of Carrick's water-color paintings make this book a meaningful book to share.

Film Review/News

Chicken Run: fable about the merits of cooperation

Chicken Run

Rated:PG Stars: Voices of Mel Gibson and Miranda Richardson. Co-directed by Peter Lord, Nick Park
Reviewed by Karen DeBoer

Chicken do have teeth, at least in Chicken Run

I haven't liked farm animals since the day I stepped into a trough of pig manure at my friend's eighth birthday party, the highlight of which was a trip through the barn to marvel at her father's hog operation. Okay, "stepped" isn't entirely accurate. Jumped, leaped in terror, vaulted into the slop trough to escape death-by-hog is more like it. Picture a gaggle of giggling girls walking down a narrow length of plywood between hundreds of huge, hungry hogs. I clung desperately to the girl in front, praying I wouldn't be charged to death by a wild pig. I would have completed the tour without incident had the pigs shown some restraint instead of oinking hysterically as we passed by. Fortunately, my friend had extra clothes which I, and anyone else who got in the way of my desperate splashing, was able to borrow.

Fear of being pecked to death

Having had a similar experience at a chicken farm (fear: being pecked to death; consequence: body becomes tangled in wire fencing), I approached the movie *Chicken Run* with slight uneasiness. I needn't have worried; plasticine chickens are much less threatening. It's the farmers I should fear.

Chicken Run is a clay-animated film parody of WW II escape movies. It tells the story of Ginger, the fearless leader of a group of British barnyard chickens, and her quest for freedom. Plucky Ginger (Julia Swahala) has caught on to the reason some of her gal pals have gone missing. A drop in egg production means a chop to the neck, administered by the evil farmer's wife, Mrs. Tweedy (Miranda Richardson). The situation becomes even more desperate with the arrival of a huge chicken-pie-making machine and an unlimited supply of fattening chicken feed for the ladies.

Pinning their hopes on Rocky-the-Rhode-Island-Rooster (Mel Gibson), a fresh fowl "flown" in from the circus, the chickens decide the only way out is to fly over the wire-fenced walls surrounding their wooden barracks. But, how to do it? After all, chickens can't fly….or can they?

One of the chickens tries to escape.

As the chickens hatch their escape plan, the evil farmers cook up a plan of their own and what follows is a very funny fable about the merits of co-operation and persistence. Like the movie, *The Great Escape* and the 1970s TV show *Hogan's Heroes, Chicken Run* is set in a dark POW-like camp controlled by boot-stomping, stupid leaders who have no idea their captives are capable of plotting a successful escape. Witty dialogue, delivered by chickens with delicious British accents, along with the bumbling antics of two thieving rats, keep things sunny-side up and serve as an excellent contrast to the gloomy farm backdrop. Ginger and Rocky's ride through the pie-making machine is as suspenseful as any real-life action adventure flick, and the final attempt to fly the coop is equally exciting. The character development is impressive. What co-creators Nick Parks and Peter Lord can do with plasticine eyes and teeth to create unique character expressions is truly amazing and nothing short of hilarious.

"As the chickens hatch their escape plan, the evil farmers cook up a plan of their own and what follows is a very funny fable about the merits of co-operation and persistence."

Middle a little bland

Unfortunately, while the movie starts and ends with a bang, the middle is a little bland. *Chicken Run*'s drawing card is the clay animation which certainly makes it worth seeing, but, unlike the computer animated movie *Toy Story*, the overall plot doesn't equal the special effects.

In Canada, the movie has a PG rating and, although it seems to be promoted as a children's movie, I wouldn't recommend it for kids under nine. There is some surprising violence. Although the characters are "clay-mations," they do represent humans and chopping the head off a friendly chicken is a bit shocking as is the lack of mercy the farmer shows his wife. There is also the delicate issue of chicken consumption. The heroes in the movie bear a remarkable resemblance to that basted piece of meat on the table a couple of times a week. Personally, I have a difficult enough time getting my children to eat my cooking without turning them off meat and eggs.

The chickens in their dark, POW-like camp.

If you want to save a few bucks, wait until *Chicken Run* comes out on home video and use your savings to rent the Wallace and Gromit movies, *Close Shave* and *The Wrong Trousers* now. Featuring clay animation by the creators of *Chicken Run*, these entertaining movies are fun for the whole family. As for me, I now order my combo meal at the local KFC with a new appreciation for chickens.

Compassion Canada announces partnership to benefit flood ravaged Mozambique

LONDON, Ont. – Compassion Canada of London, Ontario and CMC Distribution of Niagara-on-the Lake, Ont. will join together to help bring relief to the victims of the recent severe flooding in Mozambique. CMC will be donating a generous percentage of the Canadian sales proceeds of the latest offering in the multi-Platinum selling WoW series, *WoW Gold* will be directed to help stricken families rebuild their lives.

CRWRC will manage project

"Our ministry focuses on needy children and their families around the world," says Rev. Barry Slauenwhite, President of Compassion Canada. "We have been engaged in bringing hope to Africa for many years, and will continue that focus in Mozambique through this partnership with CMC Distribution and their network of over 300 independent bookstores across Canada. Much can be accomplished when the body of Christ works together. The implementation of this project in Mozambique will not only involve Compassion Canada, but other local churches from several denominations in Mozambique." Co-ordination and management will be provided by the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, an international organization with substantial experience in relief efforts.

The project in Mozambique will benefit over 10,000 flood-affected households by purchasing seeds and tools for families who have lost all their crops. Assistance will also be given to families that need to rebuild their homes and resettle their families. There is a sense of urgency as the planting season begins in September.

News reports bear witness to the severe flooding that has killed thousands of children and adults in the country, and displaced many more. The loss of homes, clothing, food and personal items has been widespread throughout the region. While the floodwaters have subsided and families are in the process of trying to establish their lives again. Disease, starvation and the need for housing are now plaguing this country as a result of the flood.

Compassion ministers to over 300,000 children and their families in 23 countries around the world. In addition, Compassion's specific relief and development projects focused on food security, micro-finance, water and sanitation bring hope and life to thousands more.

CD sales will fund project

The *WoW Gold* is the first collection in the new WoW series featuring top artists throughout contemporary Christian music history from the early '70s through the late '90s and their landmark songs. Released recently, the 30-song, two-CD or two-cassette collection features the best of today's top artists, as well as artists who pioneered the genre. The thirty artists on *WoW Gold* have sold more than 40 million albums combined, and until now they have never appeared together in one place. Through its partnership with local booksellers across Canada, CMC and their colleagues in local bookstores across Canada are committed to worldwide outreach and this initiative will allow all participants to play a significant role in alleviating the suffering and despair in Mozambique.

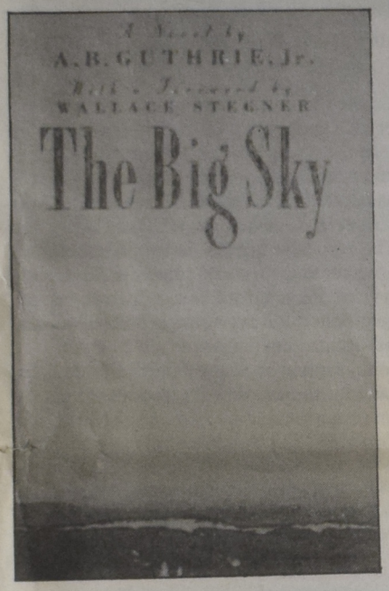
Summer Reading/Fiction

Reading yourself into the wide open spaces

Harry der Nederlanden

Reading is a little like leaving home to experience life elsewhere for a while, so going off on vacation and taking along a stash of books is a little like piling whipping cream on top of your already rich dessert. If you take along books set in the area you are travelling through, what you are seeing gets a richer resonance and color.

For many years our family made the long trek across Ontario, dipping beneath Lake Michigan (the stench of Gary, Indiana!) to the northwest corner of Iowa, where my wife's folks were farming. After visiting there a couple of days, we'd angle up into South Dakota, through the Black Hills and the Badlands (only 148 miles to Wall Drug!) across Wyoming (red earth, grey tumbleweeds) to the wide skies and rugged scenery of Montana, where we'd find places to linger and do a little climbing before we headed north to Edmonton. That's where my parents lived at the time.



Novels set in the west

In my briefcase I always carried some novels set in the west, stories about wagon trains and Indians, cattle drives and cowboys, railroads and settlers, stories that added history and adventure to the wide open spaces we drove through and made me marvel at the incredible tenacity of those who travelled here before there were roads and motels.

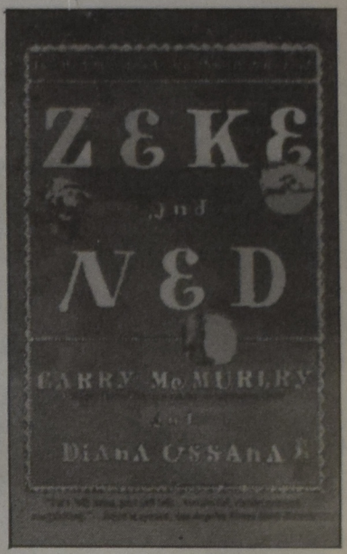
Here are a few of the novels I've read that best recreate a sense of the territory and its awesome expanse. Thomas Berger's *Little Big Man*, is mythical in scope; although it stretches human credulity to think that one man could be involved in so much of the history of the west, the texture of the novel is so authentic, you swallow it hook, line and sinker.

The Big Sky: western classic

A.B. Guthrie's *The Big Sky* is a western classic. It's part of a trilogy, one of which, *The Way West*, won the Pulitzer Prize. The evocation of landscape is masterful, the dialogue rings true and the elemental way of life of people moving into the American west in the middle of the 19th century is portrayed much more realistically than in subsequent westerns.

Lonesome Dove: epic western

A more recent western of epic scope, turned into an impressive mini-series, is *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry, a writer of many talents. If you liked the T.V. version, you'll love the novel, and there's a sequel and a prequel in case you get hooked by the adventures of the two ex-Texas Rangers. These are definitely not your generic westerns, and often you won't find them shelved in the same section as Louis Lamour, Max Brand and Luke Short.



A huge historical novel, well-written and researched, is *Dream West* by David Niven. It is the story of Charles Fremont, who was a key figure in mapping the vast territory between the Mississippi and the west coast. The wagon trains that began heading west along the Oregon Trail and other routes followed the maps created by Fremont and his party. Fremont's story is much larger than that of exploration, however, because he ended up playing an important part in the American Civil War, in the history of the gold rush, in building railroads, and in federal politics, for he even ran for president. In the fictionalized life of one man, you get a huge slice of the history of the U.S. in the latter half of the 19th century.

You might feel the need to read something from the native side of things after reading some of these

Continued on page 15 ...

Koyzis's picks: Outstanding Russian novels in English

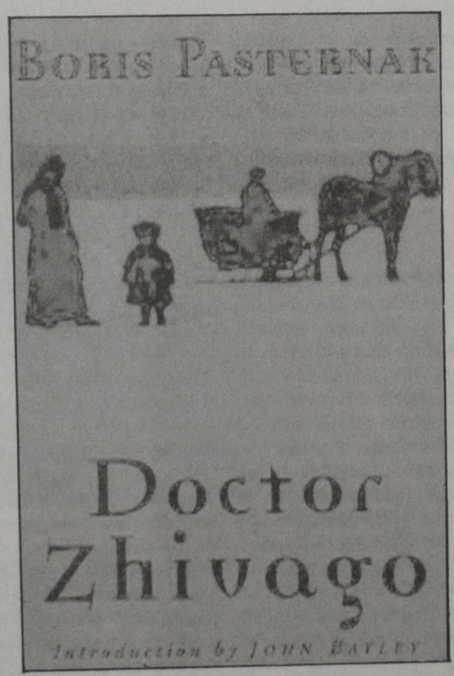
David Koyzis

It should be no surprise to anyone that I am a reader from earliest childhood. I generally gravitate to those books in the areas of politics, religion, philosophy, history and transportation (I confess to being a trolley nut — a "tram-ophile", if you will).

I rarely read novels, although when I do they are often Russian novels in English translation. Two of these I have found particularly noteworthy.

Fathers and Sons

One is Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, published in 1862 shortly after the emancipation of the serfs. It concerns the homecoming of a son of the aristocracy, Arkady Nikolaievich, after his years at university. He brings with him his friend Bazarov, a professed "nihilist" and would-be revolutionary, who is so convinced of the corruption of the old order that he believes it must be brought down and rebuilt along more rational lines. The plot revolves around the "generation gap" between Arkady's father and uncle, old-school noblemen, and the young Bazarov.



The novel is worth reading because, first, it anticipates by half a century the coming revolution and, second, it shows, in the person of Bazarov, the dark side of well-meaning attempts at bettering the life of people living under an unjust political system. Turgenev is credited with having invented the term "nihilist" in this book.

Doctor Zhivago

A second novel is of more recent vintage. This is Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*, published in 1957. It recounts the adventures of one man, Yuri Zhivago, and his family through the years of the First World War, the revolutions of 1917 and the ensuing civil war.

In the course of the book, Pasternak never actually tells us that a certain key historical event has taken place (e.g., the abdication of the tsar or Lenin's seizure of power), mentioning a related happening only in passing and only insofar as it impacts the lives of the characters. This might be confusing to someone unacquainted with Russian history. But I suspect that the author wanted to emphasize the concerns of one particular family caught in historical events beyond their control.

Zhivago seems fairly apolitical, not necessarily opposing the revolution but hardly an enthusiastic supporter either. Pasternak's de-emphasis of the grand events of history probably contributed to the antipathy of Soviet authorities.

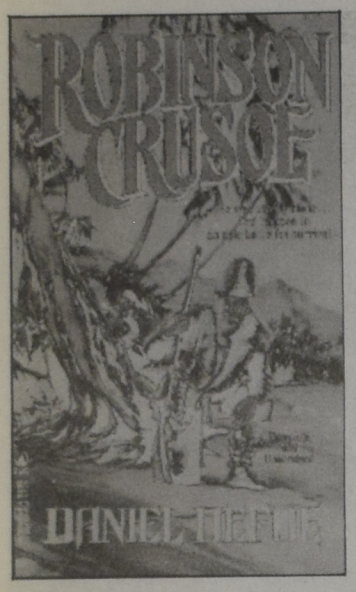
Many readers will likely remember David Lean's 1965 cinematic rendition of Pasternak's novel. While the film was very good — if overly long — it was unable to convey the author's almost studied exclusion of external history. Historical events had to be mentioned by the narrator in some detail, if only to make sense to North American audiences. Thus a movie that would speak to its intended viewers could do so only at the price of missing the central point of the book.

Saul Bellow's *Ravelstein*

The most recent novel I have read is Saul Bellow's *Ravelstein*, about a "fictitious" professor of political philosophy who becomes a millionaire after publishing a surprise best seller. Though billed as fiction, it is a thinly disguised account of Bellow's own friendship with the late Allan Bloom, author of the best-selling *The Closing of the American Mind*.

While Bellow's portrait of "Ravelstein" is affectionate, it is not very flattering. Given Bellow's penchant for borrowing his novels' characters from friends and acquaintances, reading this book made me thankful that I don't know Bellow personally.

Reading yourself into the wide open spaces



... continued from page 14

novels about the settling of the west by whites. Berger's book really seems to do a pretty good job in this respect, as his character lives with the Indians for a while. In *Zeke and Ned*, McMurtry depicts the lives of two Cherokee Indians after their resettlement in Oklahoma. How accurate this novel is historically is open to question. Certainly many of the Cherokee were considerably more cultured than the Ned and Zeke of this novel. Frederick Manfred (Feike Feikema) has written a couple of westerns that really stand up pretty well, and he went on to write a couple of novels set among the Sioux which are better than most in this genre.

Convincing Indian characters

The most convincing Indian characters that I've come across, however, are Navahoes — Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee. They are the creations of Tony Hillerman, who has written a series of detective novels set in Navaho country, any one of which will almost certainly send you looking for more. Leaphorn and Chee are members of the tribal police on the Navaho reservation, which straddles parts of four states — New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado.

Hillerman does an excellent and sensitive job of recreating for us the harsh but grand landscape of the Navaho and of their struggle to live with dignity in a difficult setting, difficult not just because of nature but also because of the influence of white culture. You learn a lot about the beliefs and situation of present-day Navahoes, which they themselves confirm to be authentic. Since the CRC now has a Navaho classis, if you're CRC, as you're enjoying Hillerman's novels you can tell yourself that you're learning something about people in your own church.

One of the few Canadian novels I know able to conjure up the sense of space of these American novels is Rudy Wiebe's *Temptations of Big Bear*. This may be no more than an indication of my limited acquaintance with Canadian fiction, however. Maybe some of you can set me straight here.

Sweeping Russian epics

All the novels I've named so far are set on this continent, but there's plenty of space in a number of Russian novels, too. The most memorable one for me because it conveys the wide sweep of the steppes is Mikhail Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don*, which also provides insight into the tragic confusions of Russian history at the time of the Revolution.

Shifting to China, another older book comes to mind: it sketches the turbulence and the violent social upheaval during the Revolution in China as told by a French writer, Andre Malraux in *Man's Fate*. Although black African writers have produced many novels of life in the African village, remarkably none that I can remember evoke a sense of the vastness and grandeur of this continent. White writers like Karen Blixen, Nadine Gordimer and Andre Brink seem to be better able to paint the big picture.

Perhaps epic vistas like the ones I'm describing have something to do with assuming the conqueror's point of view, which dwells on the vast, wild spaces of the earth either as a frontier to be brought into the orbit of human culture, or as an otherness that resists it.

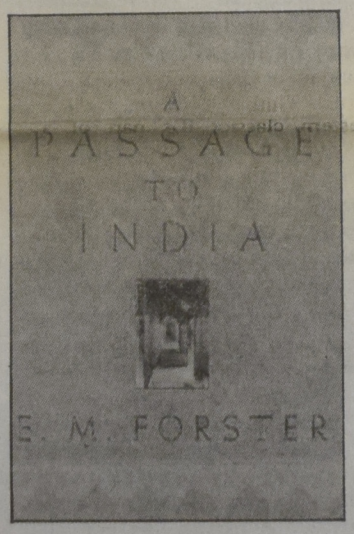
Far reaches of British Empire

This may be supported by the fact that I couldn't think of any English novels that open our imaginations to the cosmic theatre of nature the way so many American novels do. When they do so, the older English writers invariably move out across the seas to the far reaches of the British Empire: think of *Robinson Crusoe*, *Passage to India* and T.E. Lawrence's writings on Arabia. Even Thomas Hardy's heath seems claustrophobic when compared to the settings of the American and Russian novels I've mentioned.

Back to the western hemisphere, but to South America. South American writers have produced novels to rival the Americans in the evocation of space. It is a space that feels very different from that created by the Americans: it is often haunted by strange, mysterious and mythical forces. The style of some of these contemporary novels has been called "magical realism."

Brazilian *War and Peace*

One that I cannot praise more highly than to say it surpasses Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is by Mario Vargas Llosa, the man who ran for president in Peru eight years ago: it is *The War of the End of the World*. The story is set in Brazil and takes much of its subject matter from a classic Brazilian novel written in the 19th century and has some basis in fact. The central character is an ascetic wandering priest who attracts an ever growing retinue of followers from among Brazil's poorest people. With minimal preaching or teaching from the priest, whose spare figure reminds me of the drawings of Don Quixote, they



begin to organize and eventually become like a nation within a nation. The government tries to quash the movement and a truly apocalyptic war ensues. In a move of pure genius, Llosa relates part of the story from the point of view of a scientific Marxist, who is blinded before he arrives among the impoverished followers of the priest and who must therefore rely on the eyes of these simple believers imbued with yearning for a new order.

If you're looking for a few books you plan to read on the beach or at the cottage, don't go out and pay 35 bucks for the latest novel. Go to your nearest used bookstore and buy a handful of paperbacks for a fraction of the cost. That way you won't holler as much if the kids spill Kool-aid on it or trample it when you leave it on the floor of the car.

How do they do that?

After the Buzzer

I'm not into secret societies. Never have been. God only knows what makes somebody swear allegiance to a bunch of other people, keep it secret like they're C.I.A. special envoys, and prance around in parades with felt hats and bad suits. Shriners, Freemasons, Knights of Columbus. Great names but other than that, who cares?

There is a secret society that I find fascinating, though. It's that sinister group that operates on the fringes of the underground — the early morning joggers. While most of us are turning over in our beds, these folks are plodding down the street. Sweat runs in streams down their faces. The legs reach mechanically for the next stride. Their lungs wheeze and gasp for any remaining oxygen in the icy air. They pant and ache for...

Why is staying physically fit so mentally difficult?

Okay, I'm jealous. I don't have the discipline to get up early every morning and jog. There are moments when I do consider it, but I quickly dismiss the idea and reach for the snooze button (a wonderful invention but an enemy of good intentions). Time after time, I envy those who can start out the day with rigorous exercise and spend the rest of their waking hours with a spring in their step. The big question is: Why is it so hard for some of us to get motivated to do it? Why is staying physically fit such a mentally difficult thing?

First of all, our culture reinforces a sedentary lifestyle. There are so many channels and flavors of entertainment, simple exercise just doesn't cut it. We're good at talking about fitness, but we just seem to drown each other out in the babble. Those who are hyped up about getting fit can hit us over the head with their banter, while across the street some other sage, tightly wrapped in 30 per cent body fat, offers the tried phrase, "I heard that running can be bad for the knees," as he/she washes down another cocktail wienie. The end result is to fall right back into old, lazy habits.

No short-term rewards for jogging

Second, it's hard to get into something that doesn't have short-term rewards. Getting up early to jog hurts. It's hard. The results don't come until later. We're generally not long-term kind of people. It's hard to be such when you have the attention span of a gerbil. We need instant satisfaction, instant fulfillment. It's a little like the Galatian church. They knew the truth of Christ would set them free, but after a while they still slid back into the old, familiar ways of the Old Testament Law. Changing their ways hurt too much. Things haven't changed. We want tangible results now, or else nothing lasts. Even the superficial promises of a nicer body and better complexion aren't enough for some people.

All this getting in shape stuff takes time too. For most of us, taking time to exercise comes right after "clean the heads on the VCR" on the priority list. In a flash of inspiration, some may decide to do something about exercise and hurriedly call the 1-800 number for a home gym contraption for only three easy installments of $89.99. (They all have fancy names like the "Abdomenizer" or the "Butt Sculpter." A better name would be the "Spider Web Gatherer.")

Man, it's hard balancing your life. We're called to be stewards of our money, our time, and our bodies. Working that all into your lifestyle is tough sluggin'. It may mean some difficult choices like walking to the steakhouse instead of driving. Stuff like that.

See you at 6:00 a.m...

Tim Antonides teaches Grade 8 and is a basketball coach at Surrey Christian School in Surrey, B.C.

News

Canadian oil company's work in Sudan under increasing criticism

COURTESY GLENN PENNER

Glenn Penner, VOM's director for development.

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Despite pressure from the Ontario Teachers' Federation, Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) and other concerned groups, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board has refused to divest itself of its share of Talisman Energy Corp., an oil company criticized by many for its work in Sudan.

Oil company under fire

Talisman has been under fire because of its work in Sudan, which some say is helping to fund the Sudanese government's war against the largely Christian south of that country. The Sudanese government has been involved for years in the civil war, and has been accused by international observers of sanctioning bombings and even enslavement of southern Sudanese.

Earlier this year, the Harker Report, commissioned by the Canadian government, confirmed that oil development in Sudan is significantly contributing to the suffering of the people. The report criticizes Talisman for co-operating with the Sudanese government, for instance, by allowing government aircraft to use the company's airstrips to launch bombing missions.

Extraordinary suffering

The report states: "Sudan is a place of extraordinary suffering and continuing human rights violations, even though some forward progress can be recorded, and the oil operations in which a Canadian company [Talisman] is involved add more suffering... Talisman has yet to acknowledge that human rights violations have occurred which can be related to oil operations.... We think that Talisman should seek independent help to develop and implement practical means on monitoring and reporting forced removals, displacements and human rights violations in Western Upper Nile."

The Sudanese government has been forcibly removing its black, predominantly Christian population from the region in southern Sudan where Talisman is operating, according to VOM. In 1999, at least 50 per cent of the people of the county where Talisman works became refugees, reports VOM in its June newsletter.

Glenn Penner, VOM's director for development, says "we've been talking to [Talisman] for about two years," asking the company to pull out of Sudan or "at least to look very seriously at the ramifications" of its work there. But he reports there has been little movement from Talisman.

Penner believes Talisman has been hoping VOM and other concerned groups would "get tired of it and move on," but that has not happened. The controversy over Talisman's involvement in Sudan has hurt its profitability, Penner contends. "This is a time when oil companies should be making good money. They're not," he says. "They've got themselves in a mire....

"While VOM is not a lobby group, we have tried to raise a voice concerning this issue because of Canada's role in Sudan through allowing private companies to develop Sudan's lucrative oil fields," explains Penner.

According to its website, Talisman has been working in Sudan since October 1998, when it acquired the Arakis Energy Corporation's 25 per cent interest in the Greater Nile Oil Project in southern Sudan.

COURTESY CROSSROAD - LEE ABSALOM PHOTO

Sudanese soldiers. Government planes have been using oil companies' airstrip to launch bombing raids on civilians in southern Sudan.

Before that, says Penner, "Arakis was getting hammered over this," as well, and decided to pull out of Sudan.

Making a profit

VOM has also contacted the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board (OTPPB) about its concerns, says Penner. But he says that board's executive's only mandate is to make a profit. The Ontario Teachers' Federation also asked the OTPPB to divest from Talisman in June, but the board refused.

Recently, VOM co-operated with the Ottawa Talisman Divestment Campaign and Freedom Quest International to produce a brochure which calls on the OTPPB to divest from Talisman. The brochure points out that the Sudanese government "came to power by a military coup, has never held a free election, and is opposed by the vast majority of Sudanese, most vehemently in the historically and culturally distinct south." It reminds Talisman that, "A Sudanese government minister publicly stated in 1999 that oil revenues would help to build a weapons factory to support what it portrays (internally) as a holy war."

Oil revenues help finance war

The groups criticize Talisman for its work in Sudan because:

- Revenue from oil helps finance the government's war efforts;
- Government planes have been using the oil company's airstrip to launch bombing raids on civilians;
- The presence of a Canadian oil company provides political and moral cover to a government committed to achieving its anti-democratic goals by military means.

If people divest from Talisman, these groups say: "divestment will eventually cause the company to withdraw from Sudan. This will weaken the government of Sudan financially and politically, reducing its ability to wage war, and create an incentive for it to come to the bargaining table with the desire to negotiate seriously."

Talisman's departure from Sudan might not end the war, say the groups, "but Talisman's exit will likely be an important step on the road to a lasting and just peace. Other unscrupulous investors will think twice about braving international public outrage before venturing to take Talisman's place."

Sudanese government the problem

Lee Fullerton, manager of communications for OTPPB, defends the board's decision not to divest from Talisman. "As fiduciaries, our job is to make sure there's enough money for teachers' retirement," she says. "Talisman is not the problem" but the Sudanese government is.

Although the Harker Report was critical of the situation in Sudan, notes Fullerton "the Canadian government did not decide to impose sanctions" against Sudan. If sanctions had been imposed, OTPPB would have divested from Talisman, she suggested.

Fullerton points out that the pension plan board owns only about two per cent of Talisman and if Talisman pulled out of Sudan, this "would help their share price." The board first bought stocks in Talisman in 1991, before the company was working in Sudan. It does check out companies for good labor practices before investing in them, she notes.

The OTPPB has heard from some teachers who have asked the board to divest from Talisman, says Fullerton. But she believes it is the job of governments to sort out the crisis in Sudan.

Hard to raise moral issues

Jack MacNeill, a recently retired public school teacher living in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., told *Christian Courier* he had not heard of the OTPPB's investment in Talisman. "That's something that would not make a lot of teachers happy," he says.

MacNeill describes the conduct of the Sudanese government as "terrible", and asserts that Talisman has "aided the government in every way to make profits."

But he observes that it is difficult for teachers to change the OTPPB's policies because of its "arm's-length" position. Individual investors "can't go to [the board's] regular meetings and raise moral issues."

MacNeill believes the OTPPB should have ethical guidelines to follow regarding investment. Teachers should speak out about this issue, he said,and take other action such as writing letters. "We've raised moral issue with this board before," he notes.

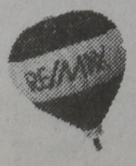
Positive spin

On its website, Talisman puts a positive spin on recent developments in Sudan. For instance, the website notes that the Sudanese government made a public commitment in June 1999 to investigate allegations of slavery and forced relocation.

Talisman also reports that last December, the company formally adopted the International Code of Ethics for Canadian Business. Under this code, the company agrees that:

- the business sector should show ethical leadership;
- wealth maximization for all stakeholders will be enhanced by resolution of outstanding human rights and social justice issues;
- concerning human rights, we will support and promote the protection of international human rights within our sphere of influence; and not be complicit in human rights abuses.

Arie Hoogerbrugge
Associate Broker
RE/MAX Del Mar Realty Inc.
840 Queenston Road
Stoney Creek, ON L8G 4A8
Bus: 905-662-5300



News

Maluku (Molucca) conflict reaches critical new phase

A Malukun Christian woman and her son, crying on the street because they lost their home, which was burnt by Muslims.

Alex Buchan

LONDON (Compass) — Religious tensions in eastern Indonesia's Maluku province spun out of control as the 18-month-long civil war between Muslims and Christians reached a critical new phase in June.

A force of 3000 Muslim fighters with heavy artillery began massacring hundreds of Christians in mid June, prompting Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid to declare a civil state of emergency on June 26. His refusal to declare martial law reflects an unwillingness to give total control to army generals, whose soldiers are accused by Christians of joining the newly arrived Muslim jihad brigades.

Christians and Muslims killing each other

However, it is hard to classify the conflict purely in terms of persecution, as both Muslim and Christian communities have been guilty of slaughtering each other.

Analysts in Jakarta talk of the conflict entering a fourth phase since trouble broke out in Maluku province in January 1999. The first phase saw fighting confined to southern Maluku, on the island and city of Ambon, with some hundreds killed. The violence subsided after April 1999.

Then in July 1999 the conflict erupted again, increasing the total number of casualties to over a thousand. In the third phase last Christmas, the war reignited and spread to northern Maluku, engulfing other islands such as Ternate and Halmahera.

The current fourth phrase is the result of a force of heavily armed Muslim jihad fighters who had traveled into Maluku in April and May this year after being trained on Java island. Their presence has altered the military balance significantly. Local police in many areas do not have the ammunition to protect Christian populations, who are now fleeing en masse, whereas before the refugees were predominantly Muslim.

Jihad fighters kill many

The jihad fighters struck on June 19-20, attacking the Christian village of Duma on Halmahera Island. According to the best evidence, they massacred 176 villagers, a further 137 were maimed, 292 houses were burned, and 10 women and children are still missing and believed killed.

At the same time, Ambon again became the scene of fierce street fighting between the Muslim warriors and a violent Christian resistance movement. The Christian University Campus of Ambon was destroyed. In northern Maluku, thousands fled, often onto boats, one of which sunk under the weight of too many passengers on June 29. Almost 500 Christians drowned.

The build up of Muslim fighters had been noted, and hard questions are being asked of the Jakarta government as to why they were unable to stop such a large force filtering into Maluku.

Extremist fundraisers

For months Muslim extremists openly raised funds in Javanese cities, stopping cars and asking people to "contribute to the jihad against Christians in Maluku." Further information has emerged that hundreds if not thousands of the new force were trained just outside Jakarta. And the fact that they were able to sneak into Maluku and suddenly acquire the kind of heavy military equipment such as rocket launchers and automatic rifles smacks of military collusion, according to some.

Leaders losing patience

Maluku's Christian leaders have lost patience with the authorities. The Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Ambon, Joseph Tethool and the Rev. Sammay Titaley, chairman of the Board of the Synod of Protestant Churches in the Moluccas, released a joint statement June 29 complaining of the "contemptible and inhuman" assault on Christians by the armed forces working hand in glove with Muslim jihad fighters.

The U.S.-based Human Rights Watch released a report June 29 alleging that "Soldiers have broken ranks and joined the fighting as partisans, and as a result, Indonesian troops right now have virtually no credibility in areas where a neutral force is most desperately needed."

Indonesia's government, though steadfastly refusing to countenance U.N. intervention, admitted that sections of the army had indeed sided with the new Muslim force. Brigadier General Tono Suratman admitted there were "rogue elements" in the 10,200 troops in Maluku, and another government spokesperson said there were plans to immediately withdraw 1,400 of the most partisan troops.

Orchestration theory

There are two main theories to explain the violence on Maluku, and they are not mutually exclusive. The first is the "orchestration theory," which is particularly pushed by Christians. It claims that Muslim extremists and disaffected pro-Suharto military factions orchestrated the violence in order to bring down the Wahid government, with a view to installing a strong-arm Islamic regime instead. Many feel that the violence will continue until at least mid August, when the Parliament meets and theoretically could force the resignation of Wahid.

Explosion theory

The second theory is the "explosion theory," favored more, though not exclusively, by Muslim observers. Here the view is that over the past 20 years, the overwhelming majority enjoyed by the Christian community in Maluku was steadily eroded by the Suharto government, who sent in hundreds of thousands of Muslims, and then in the 1990s removed Christians from positions of leadership and replaced them with Muslims.

FELLOWSHIP OF INDONESIAN CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA PHOTOS

Two Protestant churches in Maluku which have been destroyed.

Christian resentment built up to such a point, the argument goes, that they felt they had to drive Muslims out or they would be overwhelmed. What began as a spontaneous riot in Ambon was fueled then by the belief among Maluku Christians that now was the time to stop Muslim dominance.

Both views have hard evidence to back them up, but the polarization between the views has not been helped by biased reporting.

Muslim-dominated press

The Indonesian press is Muslim dominated and has made inflammatory accusations about Christians massacring Muslims, but rarely mentions Muslim atrocities.

The international press has lamentably failed to understand the difference between a committed Christian and an ethnic Christian. And even the overseas Christian press tends to report on Maluku as primarily a "persecuted Christians" case, and seems unaware of the massacres the Christian community has committed, and are even surprised to be told that until recently, the 100,000 refugees who fled the Muslim.

'It's civil war'

No doubt there are many genuine Christian believers caught in the crossfire, but as persecution specialist Brother Andrew recently declared, "If Christians are killing Muslims as well as Muslims killing Christians, that's not persecution, it's civil war!"

Said a Jakarta pastor, "There is persecution in Maluku, but don't overplay it and try to present Christians as the victims — that's what the Muslims do. They say the Muslims are the victims. The fact is, the Christian church leadership has zero influence on the Christian community of Maluku now, and there is blood everywhere. Christians have shed it. Muslims have shed it. It's time to recognize the truth."

HOME
Is
Where
The Classifieds Are

STAY HOME WITH US

News Comment

Nose for News

Bert Hielema

LET ME START with a bit of medical news. Quite a lot actually. First the good news. Tomato. Whether you pronounce it as tomaato with a long 'aye' as in potato,' or tomahto as the British do, as in 'staccato', this delicious red fruit may also be a potent weapon against heart disease and strokes.

A study by the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen, Scotland, found that the yellow jelly around tomato seeds keep platelets — small blood pieces — in the blood from clumping together and so eliminates dangerous clots that block blood vessels. Tomatoes, especially the cluster cherry kind, which has proportionally a lot more pits, point the path to an alternative to Aspirin which is now often used to prevent blood clots but can cause upset stomachs and bleeding. By the way, cherry tomatoes can easily be grown indoors, assuring a year-round supply of fresh fruits.

NOW THE BAD NEWS. Every other year a massive convention is held somewhere in our wide world, attended by some 10,000 people, doctors and researchers mostly, on the subject of AIDS. This year was the first time it was held in a victim country: Durban, South Africa, where AIDS affects 20 per cent of the adult population, for a total of some four million patients. In 2004, Toronto will be the host city. That's when AIDS will again be in the news. In the meantime Africa is bearing the brunt of this terrible disease, which kills women and men in equal proportion as well as newborn babies through the infected mother. The horrible fact is that life expectancy in that continent which would be 70 years without this affliction, is now expected to drop to 30 years, perhaps its lowest since pre-historic times.

Why is especially Africa so terribly tortured by this disaster which, worldwide, has taken almost 20 million lives, the majority in its Sub-Sahara section? Here is what I read in the *Guardian Weekly*: "(In Africa) sex and reproduction are part of a culture that encourages promiscuity. Africa is about survival, breeding to ensure your own survival. It is a culture where marriage parties, harvest festivals, graduations all come with sex..... In Malawi young girls are taken out into the bush and prepared for married life. The ritual involves sex with a single man elected by the village elders, a man with experience who could prepare them for marriage and infect the next generation of women....

"The tradition that allows an entire village of 14-year-old girls to be initiated by one man also dictates that a widow would be cleansed by sex by an outsider to clear her home of spirits; in the last months of a pregnancy and the first six months of a new-born's life a woman should allow her husband to seek other partners.... In such a culture of sexual dictates, multiple partners and women without power, AIDS has triumphed."

THAT WOMEN IN AFRICA have not much power became clear to me when we hosted in our home and later in our church a prominent member of the Presbyterian Church in Malawi. On a heart-to-heart basis I immediately clicked with the man, a deeply sincere and mature Christian. When quizzed about his family and their eating habits, he told us that he always ate alone at the table while his wife and children waited until he was finished.

In spite of the lowly state of women, or perhaps because of it, when we visited the former British colony, we saw clearly that the women there are the main force in the church and at home and on the land. In Malawi 16 per cent of the population is infected, among the lowest in Africa. Botswana has 36 per cent and Swaziland and Zimbabwe each 25. Containing AIDS is expensive — it cannot be treated for a cure — and almost impossible for rich countries such as Canada, with drugs costing hundreds of dollars per month. This would be equal to the average annual income in Africa. The typical country there spends less than $50 per person on health care each year, compared to about $2,500 in Canada. Yet AIDS is preventable, as we all know. That is the curious part in all this.

INDONESIA IS AT A CRISIS POINT. Last October, Abdurrahman Wahid was given the presidency of this country, the fourth largest in population in the world, spread out across 17,000 islands and with numerous ethnic groups. He replaced the notorious Suharto, a former army general who was very adept at enriching himself and his family at the expense of the populace.

President Wahid is a moderate Muslim, half-blind and weakened by a near-fatal stroke two years ago. Corruption is very much evident in the illegal but frequent fires set deliberately to clear forests for rubber plantations to make Firestone, Goodyear and Michelin possible. Worse are a number of ethnic trouble spots such as Aceh (also a constant source of concern for the Dutch when they ruled the archipelago from 1600 to 1942), Irian Jaya — the former (Dutch) New Guinea — and the Moluccas, with Ambon at its centre.

AMBON HAS A SPECIAL place in my heart. During the war we had a family friend, an Ambonese doctor, unable to return to his country because of the German occupation. What the Gurkhas were in the British army the Ambonese were in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army (The KNIL): fiercely loyal to the Dutch crown and for the greater part Christian. They tried to stay with the Netherlands at the time of Sukarno, and many were allowed to settle in the Netherlands where, over the years, they have been integrated to some extent. Now thousands have been killed in an outright war with Muslim extremists, imported from Java, often aided by the Indonesian Army.

AND HERE LIES THE RUB. Under Suharto the army had a free hand. Wahid, has so far managed to put the army on the defensive, and wily though he is, will probably not be able to do this much longer. Since the middle of May, the military has shown its impatience with the continuing economic turmoil, the social instability and the rampant separatism that is tearing the island nation apart. In the past the army violently suppressed any sign of dissent with Jakarta. Wahid is trying negotiations with the dissenters in Aceh, in Ambon, in Irian Jaya as well as with student demonstrators and pro-democracy activists, but he is stuck. He cannot negotiate with the provinces without offering them some form of independence or autonomy, which is unacceptable to the military.

Just imagine Canada having not one province wanting to separate, but the entire West as well. No wonder the Indonesian economy is constantly teetering on the brink of collapse. I imagine that in less than a year, there will be even greater chaos in that beautiful land.

NOW THAT I AM ON A WORLD TOUR, a few words about Germany and the Greens who have quite a bit of political clout there. The U.S.A., too, has now a Green Party with Ralph Nader as its presidential candidate. It has a support of seven per cent at the polls, enough to keep Al Gore from winning the election and so achieving a worse result than if the party had not entered the race.

Germany is a good example of what happens when a radical political movement gets a say in the governing of a nation. The Greens, now that they are in a position of power, are split between 'fundis' and 'realos'. Take Joschka Fischer. He started out as a 'fundi.' When he became environment minister of the state of Hesse in 1985, he took the oath of office in jeans and running shoes. Now as Germany's foreign minister, he has become a 'realo' and wears a three-piece suit. Fifteen years ago he opposed NATO. Last year he supported the bombing of Serbia.

When the Greens were not in government, they attracted a lot of support. Now that they have a direct voice in the governing of Europe's most powerful nation, the electorate is disenchanted with them and their poll numbers are abysmal.

My question: How do the church and the Greens — they should be allies in a common fight — respond to a comment made by Dr. Jackie Alan Giuliano, who works for the City of Seattle? He writes:

"We are entering troubling times, probably the most troubling in human history, Because of discoveries in the field of genetic engineering, we are on the threshold of being able to create life from non-life, life without nature, life without woman — which many would suggest has been the goal of our male-dominated society all along. What will the souls of these pitiful creatures be like? How will it be possible to value some person that can be created in a tube, in a dish and grow like a plant? How much easier will it be to torture and kill such a creation because it was so easy to create?"

The church, and thus all Christians, rather than fighting each other over yesterday's battles, better start preparing to cope with such totally new situations.

Bert Hielema wonders often how much or how little of a 'fundi' he really is. He lives in Tweed, midway between the economic heart of Canada and its political centre.

The Bible and Islam

by Rev. Bassam Madany

($5.95 Canada/$4.95 U.S.)
How to relate the gospel relevantly to the Muslim heart and mind.
Also available — essays on Understanding the Middle East ($1.50).
Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON
L7R 3Y8

KLM Seatsale
$719.00 Amsterdam
$549.00 Spain
LIMITED TIME - CALL FOR DETAILS
Valentine - Insignia Travel
10 Kingsbridge Garden Circle
Mississauga, ON L5R 3K6
905-890-5333 or 1-800-268-6144
London 519-472-2700 or 1-800-265-1141
St. Catharines 905-935-9103

Advertising/Business Directory

HALF-TIME PASTOR FOR PASTORAL CARE:

Community Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener, Ontario, seeks an ordained CRC Pastor for a half-time position. The successful candidate will focus primarily on pastoral care to seniors and others in need. The candidate will have leadership abilities and be a team player. Being familiar with the Stephen's Ministry would be an asset.

Please direct inquires to Clarence Damsma:
Phone: 519-743-0964 E-mail: c.jdamsma@sympatico.ca

Please direct applications to:
Community Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener
Attn.: Search Committee
1275 Bleams Rd
Kitchener ON N2G 3W5

Fax: 519-743-4434 **Phone: 519-743-9482**
E-mail: office@ccrc.on.ca **Website: www.ccrc.on.ca**

CRC EXTENSION FUND

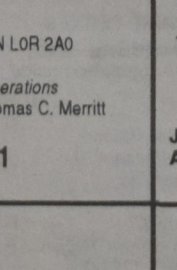
"... Serving Christian Reformed churches and Christian schools since 1970"

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.

RATES TO SEPT. 30, 2000:

Ext. Fund: 5.75 %
RRSP: 5.85 % (approx.)
Call: 416-461-1207
Write: Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1
Fax: 416-465-6367

ADA REALTY LTD.
2011-137 Ave., Suite 404
Edmonton, AB
T5A 4W2
780-473-8149
Sid Vandermeulen
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.
Home of confidence

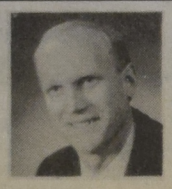


DYKSTRA BROS. ROOFING (1992) LTD.

Free Estimates
R.R. #1, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0
Marty: (905) 563-7374
Chuck: (905) 646-0199
Fax: (905) 563-0301

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
Contact:
CRC
R. Vander Ploeg, Secr./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

BUSINESS AND SERVICE DIRECTORY



Clarence Weima
Account Executive
20 Moffat Crescent,
London, ON N5W 5X3
Call (24 hrs): 1-800-488-9817
Fax: 519-455-6776
E-mail: weimac1@investorsgroup.com
Investor's Group Financial Services, Inc.

AGRI-BUSINESS
MEESTER
INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.
SPECIALIST
SMITHVILLE
1-800-465-8256 905-957-2333
www.meesterinsurance.com

Here's a suggestion:

Invest in a *CC Business Directory* ad, and get maximum returns from your investment.

Valentine Travel
Tammy Meeboer
Travel Counsellor
267 Carlton Street,
St. Catharines, ON L2N 1B7
905-935-9103 • fax: 905-935-0766

Serving the Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge area in real estate.
Jake and Judy Benjamins
Broker/Sales Rep
RE/MAX TWIN CITY REALTY
Toll-free: 1-800-877-0200
Local: 519-885-0200
Res: 519-749-1641
E-mail: JakeBenjamins@hotmail.com
Web page: www.JakeBenjamins.com

Richard Haalboom
Q.C., B.A., LL.B.
BARRISTER SOLICITOR NOTARY
7 Duke West, Suite 302
Kitchener, ON N2H 6N7
phone: 519-579-2920
fax: 519-576-0471

Digital Art & Graphics
150 Chatham St.
Second Floor
Hamilton, ON
L8P 2B6
For all your printing needs
1 colour to full colour process
flyers, books, catalogues, magazines, etc.
call **Brian Bezemer** at
(905) 528-4088 or 1-800-247-0155

Bill Verboon 905-574-6166

Automotive Repairs
TOWER SERVICE STATION LTD.
Where Quality & Service Counts
616 Upper Wellington
Hamilton, ON L9A 3P9

TEL: (905) 688-8139
FAX: (905) 685-7651
meshuis@iaw.on.ca

15 CHURCH STREET
P.O. BOX 96
ST. CATHARINES, ON
L2R 6R4

MARK D. ESHUIS, B.A., LL.B
BARRISTER - SOLICITOR - NOTARY PUBLIC

- CRIMINAL LAW
- WILLS AND ESTATES
- REAL ESTATE
- CIVIL LAW

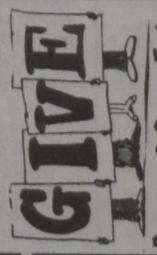
BAKKER ATAMANUK
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS
150 James St., P.O. Box 1328
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7J8
Albert J. Bakker
905-688-1520

MAGNAVOX-HITACHI-ZENITH SALES & SERVICE
TELEVISION-RADIO-STEREO
ANTENNA INSTALLATION & REPAIRS
GARY VAN DYK
Serving the Niagara area for 30 years.
GRANTHAM TV CENTRE LTD.
391 Vine St., St. Catharines, Ont.
Phone: (905) 934-9952 or (905) 934-9964

Only $25 per month!
1 (800) 969-4838

MERRITT FUNERAL HOME
287 Station St., Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
Serving Families For 4 Generations
Directors: Gove C. Merritt and Thomas C. Merritt
(905) 957-7031

Jerry's Auto Body (Beamsville) Inc.
Serving Beamsville and area since 1969
Complete Collision Repairs • Quality Refinishing
Jerry Gerritsen
Alan Gerritsen
5529 Regional Rd. #81
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B3
Phone/Fax: (905) 563-7702



Your gift to Reformed Faith Witness is "tax receiptable" and will be greatly appreciated by the staff of *Christian Courier*, the board of Reformed Faith Witness, and all of our (potential new) subscribers!
Make your cheque payable to Reformed Faith Witness.

Electric Power Tool Service Saw Blade Sharpening
Supplier of Quality Woodworking Machines
ART'S TOOL SALES & SERVICE Ltd.
10 Nihan Dr.
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 1L1
(905) 646-0728
Aart Van Krimpen
"We service what we sell"

Winter Bookkeeping & Tax Service
4184 Mountain Street, P.O. Box 844
Beamsville, Ont. L0R 1B0
phone 905-563-4471 fax 4696
email: winter@vaxxine.com
Emma Winter

Glendale Motors
407 Wilson St., Ancaster
Just west of Mohawk on Hwy. #2
We supply propane
Rob Brouwer
Doug Kloet
Shell
(905) 648-4113 **Adrian Kloet (owner)**

BETTER THAN SLICED BREAD
(unless you're making toast)
a subscription to
Christian Courier
1-800-969-4838

Classifieds

Classified Rates

As of May 1999:
Note: 7% GST will be added to all prices listed below.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Christian Courier is published on alternate Mondays. Copy deadline for each issue is 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, nine business days prior to publication.

RATES

All personal and family announcements: $16.00 per column inch (pci) + GST (columns are two inches wide). Display advertising re.: businesses and organizations: minimum $18.20 pci + GST, depending on design and frequency.

PHOTOS

There is a processing fee of $25 for the inclusion of a photograph with a personal or family announcement. Photo space is not charged pci, but we reserve the right to determine published photo size. Please note that we cannot use a faxed photo. We need either an original (which we will return) or a downloadable Internet image.

PERSONAL ADS

Christian Courier would be pleased to handle your personal ad in an efficient and discreet manner. The cost to set up a personal file under a unique file number is $35. Ads requesting correspondence with this file are run at $16 pci per insertion. All correspondence is immediately forwarded unopened.

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a $25 one-year subscription to couples whose wedding is announced in *Christian Courier* and to parents who announce the birth of a child in our paper. Please let us know when placing your ad that you want to take advantage of this offer.

SUBMITTING YOUR AD

mail: *Christian Courier*
#4 - 261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
fax: 905-682-8313
email: ccadpromo@aol.com

OTHER INFORMATION

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. And editing style.
b) Please provide us with clear copy. *Christian Courier* is not responsible for any errors due to hand written or phoned-in advertisements.

Wedding

It is with joy and thankfulness that we, RICHARD and AGNES GLOCKNER and ADRIAAN and IRENE SCHOUTEN announce the wedding of our children

ALISSA HELEN
and
JASPER

The ceremony is to take place on August 12, 2000, in Niagara Falls, Ont. Pastors Schouten and Schuurman officiating.

Send your anniversary, birthday and other important family notices to *Christian Courier* at fax #: 905-682- 8313, or by e-mail to: ccadpromo@aol.com

Weddings

Family and friends witnessed the exchange of wedding vows between

Ed Top
and
Michelle Gritter

on July 9, 2000, in the Christian Reformed Church of Abbotsford, B.C. We pray for God's rich blessings upon them as they prepare for service in his kingdom.
Ed and Michelle's address: 34789 Arden Dr., Abbotsford, BC V2S 2X9

With joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we, Keith and Cindy Woudstra of Halton Hills, Ont. wish to announce the wedding of our first-born son

Matthew Drew Woudstra
to
Gwenda Albertina Hiemstra

daughter of Theo and Ann Hiemstra of Alymer, Ont.
The wedding will take place the 12th day of August 2000, D. V. at 2:30 in the afternoon in the Hiemstra garden with Rev. Paul Little officiating.
Future address: 2400 New St., Apt. #902 Burlington, ON L7R 1J8

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Herman & Stiny de Jong on their 45th wedding anniversary.

1955 2000
With grateful thanks to God we are happy to announce the 45th anniversary of our parents
HERMAN and STINY DE JONG
May God grant you His continuing love in the years to come!
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Henry & Wendy de Jong – St. Catharines
Michael, Jovita, Laura
Wayne & Marcia de Jong – Hamilton
Janine, Sarah, Mark
Edwin & Cindy de Jong – Grand Rapids
Amy, Blake
Gerine & Phil de Jong-Vriend – Toronto
Silas, Justin, Adam
David & Amy de Jong – New York
Christina & Paul Lantinga – Toronto
Simon, Gabriela
Paul de Jong – Toronto
An Open House will be held in the St. John's Anglican Church, Carlton St., Thorold on Saturday, August 12, 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Best wishes only.
Home address: 4414 Jordan Rd., RR 1, Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0

Hamilton, Ont. Surrey, B.C.
1955 August 6 2000
"And the Lord will guide you continually." (Isaiah 58:11a)
With joy and thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father, who has kept them in His care and blessed us with their love and guidance, we hope to celebrate D.V. the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents
REV. PETER and MAAIKE BROUWER (nee VENEMA)
We thank God for the time He has given our parents together and pray that He will grant you many more years together and with us your children and grandchildren:
Garret & Wendy Brouwer – Surrey, B.C.
Peter, Daniel, Jeffrey, Rachel
Sonya & Ray Lenos – Simcoe, Ont.
Annemarie, Jessica
Peter & Joanne Brouwer – Jarvis, Ont.
David, Alicia, Emily, Heather
Tricia & Dave Cook – Grimsby, Ont.
Derek, Brian, Janine, Jeliesa
Fred & Jacquie Brouwer – Kitchener, Ont.
Krista, Amanda, Nathaniel, Janessa
Mike & Marguerite Brouwer – Abbotsford, B.C.
Nicole, Angela, Mikhaila
Annette & Vince Van Randen – Surrey, B.C.
Theresa, Ryan, Jennifer
An Open House was held on Saturday August 5, 2000, from 2-5 p.m. at the New Westminster Chr. Ref. Church, New Westminster, B.C.
We all hope D.V. to celebrate together with our parents during the first two weeks of August.
Address: #12-7955 122nd St., Surrey BC V3W 4T4

Lutjegast the Neth. Georgetown Ont., Canada
1945 July 12 2000
Psalm 127
With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we
SIDNEY ADEMA
and
ANNA ADEMA STEURSMA
celebrated our 55th wedding anniversary.
Along with our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, we continue to praise God for His love and faithfulness in our lives.
Address: 48 Wildwood Rd., Georgetown, ON L7G 2W8

1960 August 26 2000
With joy and thanksgiving to the Lord, we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents
THIJS and CORRIE EERKES (nee KAMPINGA)
May God continue to bless and guide you.
All our love:
Eppo & Judy – Jordan Station
Sarah, Emily, Rebecca
Frank & Elaine – Oakville
John, James
Elza & Steve – Fonthill
Katelynn, Jacob, Simon, Robyn
John Paul – Oakville
Home address: 2078 Devon Rd., Oakville, ON L6J 2N2

Anniversaries

Congratulations to William & Anna Spoelstra on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Leeuwarden, Fr. Hamilton, Ont.
1950 August10 2000
WILLIAM and ANNA SPOELSTRA (nee WELLENGA)

"For apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5b)

With thankfulness to God, we celebrate along with our children:
Aleida & Tom Zeyl
Fred & Joanne Spoelstra
Wilma & John Vanderwoerd
Peter & Audrey Spoelstra
Bill & Anne Spoelstra
and our grandchildren and great-grandchildren
His faithfulness to us during the past 50 years.

We invite you to share our joy with an Open House on Sat., August 12, 2000, in the fellowship hall at Mount Hamilton CRC at 1411 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.
Home address: 103 Burrwood Dr., Hamilton ON L9C 3T3

Obituaries

Niawier, Fr. Wyoming, Ont.
June 22, 1918 - July 7, 2000
On July 7, our mother
SADIE (SIEBRIGJE) VANDER KLOET (nee WYBINGA)
wife of the late Ron (Romke) Vander Kloet, went to be with the Lord. Her children will miss her but are grateful that the suffering caused by major strokes is now over. She has a new "whole" body and can sing a new song to the Lord.
Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild are:
Andrew & Gerda Vander Kloet – St. Catharines
Jana & Tim, Ingrid, Marie, Eric
Sam & Norma Vander Kloet – Wyoming
Chris Vander Kloet and Cindy Butler – Sarnia
Chad, Todd & Jessica (Tyler)
Irene & Mark Richards – Wyoming
Psalm 121 - Mother's comforting Psalm from April 29 to May 7.
Funeral service was held in the Wyoming Christian Reformed Church on July 10, 2000, Rev. Pete Vander Beek officiating.
Correspondence address:
Andrew Vander Kloet, 48 Else St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 2C3

St.Anna Parochie, Fr. Surrey, the Neth. B.C.
Jan. 16 1925 - June 22 2000
"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." (Matthew 5:8)
The Lord took home my beloved husband
RENZE(RAY) BEIMERS
after thirty years of marriage to Tina Beimers nee Van Slageren.
Predeceased by two brothers and survived by six brothers and numerous in-laws and nieces and nephews.
Home address 103-138 102nd Ave., Surrey, BC V3T 1P2

On July 4, 2000, the Lord called home his child and faithful servant
KEES VAN DIEEN
at the age of 70 years.
Beloved husband of our sister Isabel and dear father of Renee, Jodie (Paul Jones) and Sonja.
The words of Psalm 121 are our comfort.
Fondly remembered by:
Gerry & Jänny Hoogeveen
Francisca & Henry, Marc
Coba & John Van Noort
Michael & Jennifer, Matthew & Corry ann
John & Henny Hoogeveen
John & Tracey, Eraina & Peter, Krista
Until we meet again.
Nepean, Ontario.

Classifieds

Anniversary

Congratulations to Jan & Aleida Kroezen on their 70th wedding anniversary.

1930 August 3 2000

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." (Prov.3:5)

JAN and ALEIDA KROEZEN
(nee SCHOLING)

We are oh so thankful to our heavenly Father, that on August 3rd we will celebrate Dad and Mom's 70th wedding anniversary.

All praise and honor go to God, the giver of life.

Gretha (†1995) & Arie VanHelden
Rita & Henk, John & Joyce, Alice & Steve, Margareth & Wilbert, Anthony & Monica, Tim & Sandra
John & Jane Kroezen
Cathy, Rosemary & Gustavo, Tim & Janet, Ian & Tammy, Aleida & Doug, Bert, Calvin & Cheryl
Gary & Ria (†1986) Kroezen
Marlene & Mike, John & Tammy, Kristine & Shaun
Libby Kroezen
Adelina & Al, Rietta & Rich, Janet & Mike
and 42 great-grandchildren.

Family luncheon is planned for this great event on August 5, 2000.

Address: 671 Frank St., Box 10, Gateway Haven, Wiarton, ON N0H 2T0

Obituaries

It is with great sorrow that we announce

JOHANNA J. KRUYSSE

has passed away on July 7, 2000.

Surviving are:
Hendrika (Anne) and
Rosaire Alex ander
Adriana (Lea) and Bill Gregory
Peter and Jean Kruysse
and nine grandchildren and 12 great-granchildren, two brothers and two sisters in the Netherlands.

Also surviving is one nephew Eugene Kruysse of Mississauga.

Correspondence address:
Anne Alexander, 20 Brock Cres., Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4X6

Obituaries

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28)

KATHY FEKKEN

age 44, of Sarnia, Ont., went home to be with Jesus on Tuesday, July 11, 2000.

Beloved daughter of Jacoba (Hulshof) Fekken and the late John Fekken (†1975).

Beloved sister of:
Jacqueline & Egbert Bebingh
Sylvia & Art Schouten
Albert Fekken
Wilma Fekken and friend Terry Hall
Richard Fekken

Lovingly remembered by nieces and nephews: Bert-John, Coby, Trevor, Christopher, Jason, Jamie, Steve, Kimberly.

Special friend of Patsy and Lisa.

Lisse Brampton
the Neth. Ont., Canada
Jan.8,1919 - July 21, 2000

After a brief illness, it pleased the Lord to take to Himself

ALIDA CORNELIA JONKER-HOOGENDOORN

Loving mother to:
Leo & Irene Jonker
Herman & Magda Jonker
Roland & Coby Jonker
Peter Jonker & Sandra Martens
Clarence & Judy Riepma
Margot & Bart Vegt
Joanne Jonker-Lohr & Archie Lohr
Martin & Antoinetta Jonker
Caroline & Ron Leenstra

Grandmother to 28 grandchildren and great-grandmother to 23 great-grandchildren.

Predeceased by her husband Rev. Peter M. Jonker, daughter Alma, son John and grandson Michael.

RYKJE MULDER-OOSTWOUDER
(nee DOORN)

passed away peacefully at home on April 18, 2000, surrounded by her family, after a short battle with cancer.

Born in Sloterdijk, the Netherlands on May 23, 1933.

She left behind a loving husband Henry Mulder, and daughters Lillian Thornwood, Audrey Winter and son-in-law David Winter, son Jacob Oostwouder and daughter-in-law Elaine Oostwouder.

She will also be fondly remembered by her six grandchildren, step-children and step-grandchildren.

Funeral was held on April 19, 2000, at the Christian Reformed Church of Essex, Ont., where she lived the last five years of her life. Revs. Dan Tigchelaar and Peter Nicolai officiated.

We give thanks to God that she may now be with Him forever.

Correspondence address:
240 Irwin Ave., Essex, ON N8M 2T6

Job Opportunity

Help Wanted: Greenhouse operation in Fenwick, Ont. is looking for **full-time or part-time help** beginning in September. Please call **905-892-2291** for more information.

CHRISTIAN COURIER CLASSIFIEDS –

Bed & Breakfast

Beautiful Niagara Falls, easy walk to the Falls. Comfortable Rooms; Superb Breakfast, Dutch spoken. Open this year May 20.
Joan & Mike Havinga 905-358-3534
E-mail: mhavinga@becon.org

Job Opportunities

300 sow farrow to finish swine operation, located in southwestern Ontario, is interested in employing a herdsperson. Housing and transportation are supplied. Close to church and school. Phone **519-683-6068.**

For Rent

MEADOW VALLEY HOUSE
Seniors Residence, Dundas,Ont.
- 24 hr. assisted daily living care
-meals, laundry service provided
- English & Dutch spoken
For more info, call 905-627-1108

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The date for the fall meeting of Classis BCSE has been changed. We will meet on October 21 & 22, 2000 in the First CRC of Langley, BC. The deadline for the Agenda is August 15, 2000.

Gerrit J. Veeneman, Stated Clerk
Classis BCSE
c/o Trinity CRC
PO Box 2268, Abbotsford, BC
V2T 4X2

Miscellaneous

Consider placing a Personal Ad. $16.00/column inch per insertion. One time set-up fee is $35.00 for a box number. GST is extra..

AOW EN BEDRIJFSPENSIOEN

DUTCH RETIREMENT CONSULTING AGENCY

✦ Als U na 1 januari 1957 bent geëmigreerd heeft U mogelijk recht op AOW (pensioen).

✦ Heeft U of Uw partner in Nederland gewerkt, dan heeft U mogelijk recht op Bedrijfspensioen.

Wenst U hulp, contact:
Dutch Retirement Consulting Agency
PO Box 7544
Grand Rapids MI 49510
...of bel één van de volgende nummers:
616-245-9911
616-531-4046/res.

Job Opportunities

Calvin Theological Seminary

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

has three tenure-track openings:

Professor of World Missiology
(primary responsibilities in the Master's program)
Deadline for applications is September 29, 2000

Professor of Philosophical and Moral Theology
(primary responsibility in the Ph.D. program)
Deadline for applications is September 29, 2000

Professor of Historical or Systematic Theology
Deadline for applications is October 31, 2000

For a position description, please contact:
Office of the President – Appointments
3233 Burton Street SE
Grand Rapids MI 49546
phone: 616-957-6209
e-mail: kprg@calvin.edu
fax: 616-957-8621

Applicants and nominees must be wholeheartedly committed to the Three Forms of Unity to the Polity of the CRCNA
Calvin Seminary is an equal opportunity employer

MAPLE ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION CANADA LTD.

IS A WELL-ESTABLISHED DESIGN/BUILD GROUP WITH HEAD OFFICES IN BRAMPTON, ONT.

Due to continued expansion we require:

- **Project Superintendent**
  with at least 5 years experience who is familiar with all building trades and has strong organizational abilities.
- **Senior Estimator**
  with at least 5 years experience as an estimator in building construction.
- **Junior Coordinator/Estimator**
  to assist project managers and estimators in the procurement and expediting of construction projects. The candidate will be a recent civil engineering technologist graduate.

Send resumes to raye@maple.ca
or fax: 905-457-2498.

Help to support Christian Journalism!

CHRISTIAN COURIER

is a ministry of Reformed Faith Witness.

All gifts of $10.00 or more are tax deductible and will receive an official receipt.
Please make cheques payable to:
Reformed Faith Witness.

Classifieds

Miscellaneous | Job Opportunities

Psalter Hymnals falling apart?

Don't buy replacements, recycle them. We can rebind almost any book for a fraction of the cost of new, and the rebound books will last much longer than the original binding. Why not send us one of your church's hymnals or bibles and we will rebind it at no charge, just to show you how good your old books can look. Send your sample request on church letterhead with the item for binding.

Limit one sample per church. Normal price for quantities of five or more is $5.65. We rebind and restore all types of books, including personal and family bibles.

wbm Wallaceburg Bookbinding & MFG. CO. LTD.
1-800-214-BIND
95 Arnold Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 3P3

PICTURE THIS!

YOU CAN ADVERTISE IN OUR *BUSINESS DIRECTORY* ONCE A MONTH FOR ONLY $25.00 + GST

CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
TERRACE, B.C.

TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN

Centennial Christian School invites applications to fill a teacher opening in the area of French. This position involves teaching French at the Grade 7-11 level with Grade 12 added the following year. This position may also involve teaching duties in other areas.

Centennial Christian School is an inter-denominational school and presently offers Christian education to approximately 240 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. **Grade 11 is being added in September 2000, and Grade 12 in September 2001.** This has created new openings as stated above. Please contact the principal or vice-principal for further details and send letter of application, resume and other information to:

Centennial Christian School
Frank Voogd - Principal
Curtis Tuininga - Vice-principal
3608 Sparks St., Terrace BC V8G 2V6
phone: 250-635-6173 fax: 250-635-9385
e-mail:ccs@telus.net

With additional (unanticipated) enrollment,

HOUSTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
in Houston, B.C.

needs a teacher in the Grade 9-10 area beginning in September. We expect 94 students in Grades 7-12. The teaching assignment for a new teacher may involve the other grade levels. Someone with teaching strength in English and the fine arts area would be especially welcome.

Houston is a forestry-based community of about 5000 people. Our students attend four local churches: Baptist, Canadian Reformed, Christian Reformed and Pentecostal.

Please call or fax:
Bill Beamish, board vice-president
(He will be in regular contact with the principal.)
Phone: 250-845-2238 (work)
250-845-2464 (home)
Fax: 250-845-3429

DEPOSIT WHERE YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

With
your deposits
we are able to give
preferred financing to
Kingdom Causes like

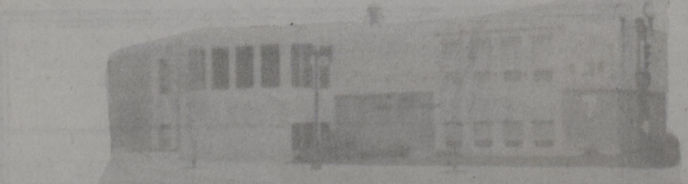
- Churches
- Christian schools
- Christian homes for the elderly and the handicapped

We currently have commitments and loans to Kingdom Causes of **$6 million** and total assets of **$40 million**

• • •

In addition to offering great rates on deposits, we shared with our members over **$300,000** in profits last year

CALL US TODAY
for a competitive quote and help build our **Christian Community**
780 426 7165
Toll Free 1-877-426-0506
(Canada Wide)



10704 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0W8

Christian Credit Union Ltd.

Deposits 100% Guaranteed

Travel

Lowest $ Travel Insurance

EUROPE & WORLDWIDE dcatravl@istar.ca
Visit us at: www.dca-travel.com
TORONTO : 416-224-5211
DCA Travel & Cruise 1-800-667-2525

- *All - Airlines & Charters*
- *Vacation Packages*
- *Bus Tours - Hotels*
- *Car Rentals*
- *Cruises*

FREE *Chance to win Martinair flight with your booking*

AMSTERDAM
Martinair
Canada 3000
Air Transit
Air Canada
KLM

AIR CANADA
Fall/Winter
Special from
$659.00
Taxes extra

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is $7.50 per line, or $1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

Aug. 11-14	Institute for Christian Studies' Ontario Summer Conference: "Written Not with Ink: Living the Biblical Story," Maple Grove Christian Retreat Centre, **Thamesford,** Ont. Call 416-979-2331 for details or visit **www.icscanada.edu.**
Aug. 12-13	**Brooks,** Alta. CRC 50th Anniversary celebration weekend. Church picnic on Sat., commemorative services on Sun. Please RSVP to Lis if you plan to attend at 403-378-4571or llyzenga@eidnet.org
Aug. 27	Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster,** Ont. - Rev. Kuntz preaching. (#)
Sep. 2-3	**Cochrane,** Ont. CRC, 50th Anniversary celebration.(For info see display ad in July 10 issue of CC.) (#)
Sep. 16	"Life After Carismania," free seminar with Ted Brooks, Fantasyland Hotel - Conference Centre, **West Edmonton Mall**. For info call Victoria Life Church, Westlock Alta. 1-800-816-8378. (#)
Sept. 17	A Special 50th Anniversary Worship, 10 a.m., First CRC, **Toronto,** Ont.. For more information of Anniversary celebrations, call 416-481-4912. (#)
Oct. 1	Dutch service, 3 p.m., Ancaster CRC, Hwy. 53, **Ancaster,** Ont. - Rev. J. Hoytema preaching. (#)
Oct. 7-8	Thanksgiving weekend 50th Anniversary celebrations, First CRC, **Toronto,** Ont. For more information, call 416-481-4912.(#)
Oct. 7-8	First CRC of **Barrie,** Ont. 50th Anniversary celebrations. Thanksgiving dinner and program on Saturday, Services at 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m. on Sunday. For more info, call 705-734-9166. (#)
Oct. 7-9	Thanksgiving weekend 50th Anniversary celebrations, First CRC of **Rocky Mountain House,** Alta. For more information, call 403-845-6067. (#)
Oct. 9-15	First CRC of **Abbotsford,** B.C. 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Call 604-859-5908. (ad July 10 issue)(#)
Oct. 11	The First CRC of Ladner B.C. - 50th Anniversary Service - 8 p.m., **Delta,** B.C.
Oct. 28-29	First CRC of **Kingston,** Ont. 50th Anniversary Celebrations. (See ad in this issue). (#)
Nov. 3	Christian Festival Concert under the direction of Leendert Kooij, Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto.** $25/$20/$15 Call 416-636-9779. (See ad in July 24 issue of CC.) (#)
Nov. 11-12	First CRC of **Lethbridge,** Alta. 50th Anniversary celebrations. Call Anne Bosma at 403-328-9985 for more info. (#)
Nov. 17	First CRC of **Thunder Bay,** Ont. - 50th Anniversary celebration dinner and program. For dinner reservations or more information, call Audrey Grootenboer at 807-935-2778. (#)

FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
Thunder Bay, Ontario

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

All former members and friends of the congregation are invited to a celebration on

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2000 D.V.

Join us for a dinner and a program at 6:30 p.m.
For dinner reservations or more information, please call Audrey Grootenboer at 807-935-2778.
50th Anniversary Books are also available.
"Remembering God's Covenant Faithfulness." (Deut. 7:9)

BARRIE FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH will be celebrating its Fiftieth Anniversary D.V. on October 7 - 8, 2000.

Former members and friends are invited to a special Thanksgiving dinner followed by an evening program consisting of historical reflections and fellowship on Saturday, October 7.

Special anniversary services will be held on Sunday, October 8, (10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.) conducted by former pastors.

For more information and to order tickets for the dinner, please contact the church secretary at 705-734-9166.

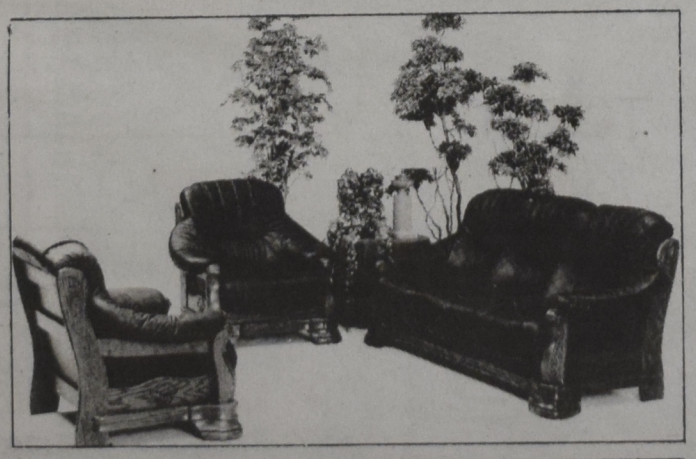
First Christian Reformed Church of Barrie
33 Shirley Ave., PO Box 875
Barrie ON L4M 4Y6

YOU CAN ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS MONTHLY IN OUR BUSINESS DIRECTORY WITH A 2.5" X 1.75" AD FOR ONLY $25.00 + GST PER INSERTION.

TIME FOR NEW FURNITURE?

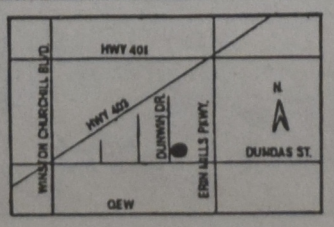
Come and see our beautiful showroom with the European flair!

SCHRÖDER FURNITURE



... for that special item!

Our "coil" spring furniture has all the support and comfort you need.



Mississauga, Dundas St. — 2 Blocks W. of Erin Mills Parkway (905) 828-951

Celebrating 50 Years!
First Christian Reformed Church
of Kingston, Ontario

will be celebrating, the Lord willing, its
50TH ANNIVERSARY
October 28 and 29, 2000.

All former members and friends of the congregation are invited. Celebrations begin with an Open House on Saturday, October 28th from 1-3 p.m. in the church.

A Dinner will be held at 5:30 p.m. at the Day's Inn followed by a program reflecting on the past 50 years and God's faithfulness to us.

A special service involving former Pastors will be held on Sunday, October 29th at 10 a.m. in the church.

For dinner reservations or more information please contact: the church secretary, Sylvia Bouma, phone: 613-542-8350; e-mail: 1stcrc@kos.net or Hetty VanDasselaar (evenings) phone: 613-384-1966; e-mail: hvan@kingston.net

"Faith is the leading grace in all our spiritual warfare and conflict; but all along, while we live, it hath faithful company that adheres to it and helps it. Love works, and hope works, and all other graces — self-denial, readiness to the cross — they all work and help faith. Yet when we come to die, faith is left alone. Now, try what faith will do."

... John Owen

News

Websites aim to save starving people, rainforests

PAUL SMITH

Poverty-stricken children in India recycle trash.

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — The Hunger Site, a website focussed on helping to feed the starving people of the world, is collecting one million signatures on a petition asking the United Nations to work harder to end world hunger. Similarly, the related Rainforest Site is preparing a petition urging the UN to protect the world's rainforests.

UN hunger petition

Greatergood.com, the for-profit agency that runs both sites, wants to collect one million signatures on the petition by September 1, so that it can forward the hunger petition to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on World Food Day, October 16. The petition states:

"We, the undersigned, as citizens of member states of the United Nations, do hereby petition the United Nations and its governing bodies to increase its resource commitment to end world hunger. Currently, 24,000 people die each day of hunger or hunger-related causes — 75 per cent of these people are children under five. We believe this is unacceptable. Help us promote taking care of those around the world that cannot maintain a healthy life due to malnutrition and hunger.

"We call upon our world leaders, of every nationality, to utilize their power and representation in the United Nations to commit more resources to end world hunger."

Interested people can sign the petition online, by going to this website: **www.thehungersite.com/rbt/THSPetition .**

Click to donate

The Hunger Site refers to itself as "the world's first 'click-to-donate' site. Visitors to the site can make a donation by simply clicking on the button labelled "Donate Free Food." But visitors don't pay for the donation — sponsors who advertise on the donation page pay the whole shot.

For sponsors, advertising on the site is good public relations, connecting their names with a worthwhile cause. Actually, the Hunger Site does not accept financial donations.

Each time site visitors click on the donation button, at least 1/4 cup of food (worth half a cent) is donated to needy people (on a recent visit to the site, one click resulted in 1 3/4 cups of food being donated, because six sponsors were listed on the site).

Donations are limited to one per person per day, so web surfers can't keep clicking on the site repeatedly.

Greatergood.com arranges to distribute food through the UN World Food Programme (UNWFP), which works in 82 countries. UNWFP selects the most appropriate food to distribute in any given country. Rice, wheat and maize are the most common choices, because they are staple foods for most of the world's population, according to Greatergood.com.

24,000 die each day

The site also features a World Hunger Map, which shows the approximate frequency and location of hunger-related deaths across the world. Whenever a country on the map darkens, this signifies that a person has died from hunger in that country. Greatergood.com reports that 24,000 people die of hunger each day.

So far, about 65 million visitors have donated more than 7,700 metric tons of food to hungry people, according to Greatergood.com. This year, The Hunger Site was recognized by the fourth annual Webby Awards (for Internet sites) and won The People's Voice Award in the Activism category.

Rainforest Site

Based in Seattle, Wash., Greatergood.com also manages The Rainforest Site (linked to The Hunger Site), which allows donors to save a free area of rainforest with the click of a button. These donations, distributed by The Nature Conservancy, are paid for by The Rainforest Site's sponsors. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a leading private, international conservation group. TNC preserves habitats and species by saving the lands and waters they need to survive.

Like The Hunger Site, The Rainforest Site also has a petition to deliver to the United Nations this fall. This petition states:

"We, the undersigned, as citizens of member states of the United Nations, do hereby petition the United Nations and its governing bodies to enforce the implementation of the political and legal commitments entered into by the international community in efforts to protect the rainforest. Currently, almost two acres of tropical rainforest disappear every second, depleting many of the resources needed for our world's fresh water, pharmaceuticals, and species.

We call upon our world leaders, of every nationality, to utilize their power and representation in the United Nations to commit more funds and resources to save our world's rainforests."

Donations to this site help preserve 2.4 square feet of land in the world's rainforests. Money sent out by site sponsors is used primarily to buy land, but also to hire, train and equip park rangers; conduct environmental education programs for people living in and around the area; and develop environmentally compatible methods of resource use.

LOREN MCINTYRE

A massive fire in the Amazonian jungle in western Brazil. The Rainforest Site helps to concerned people preserve this and other rainforests.

Voortman

Color printing of this issue of *Christian Courier* is made possible by the generosity of Voortman Cookies Ltd. Thanks!

News Digest

The barefoot pastor

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. (Religion Today) — A pastor enjoys going barefoot so much that he performs services and weddings that way. Going without shoes is "symbolic of innocence and simpler times," David Vallelunga of the United Methodist Church in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., told the *New York Times*. "We pay more for sneakers in this country than people in some countries make in a year," said Vallelunga, 39. "Plus, I feel very confined and out of touch when I'm in shoes."

The barefoot cause is gaining ground, the *Times* reports, as hundreds of people say it is comfortable, liberating, and environmentally friendly.

The 'Toughman' pastor

DELTONA, Fla. (EP) — A Florida pastor who is an ex-convict has joined the National Toughman Contest as a way of spreading the gospel, to make up for a wasted past.

Rev. John Roger Capelli, 39-year-old pastor at Faith Fellowship Church in Deltona, participated in this year's Toughman Contest, an amateur boxing competition.

Capelli, whose rap sheet includes third-degree murder (from a drunk driving accident) and assaulting a police officer, told the *Orlando Sentinel* participating in the contest is a way to reach people who are on the road to Hell. "For the people who might not otherwise listen to a preacher, I can get their attention. Once you get that, you give them the message."

The cat came back

BOULDER, Colorado (AP) — A cat named Lapis recently hopped into a car in Boulder Colorado and ended up in the Yukon. The cat apparently hid in a car belonging to Edward Chambers, who stopped in Boulder before driving home to Champagne, Yukon.

Chambers discovered Lapis when his dog chased the cat up a tree near his home. He noticed the phone number on the cat's tag, and asked his son-in-law, David Grant, to call Jennifer Hill, the cat's owner.

Hill was skeptical about the story, but says, "I asked a lot of questions to verify, and I realized it had to be her." Grant shipped Lapis to Hill's sister in San Francisco, and Hill drove there to pick up her cat. She sent a $200 (US) reward to Grant.